

Aristoxenus of Tarentum
The Pythagorean Precepts
(How to Live a Pythagorean Life)

An Edition of and Commentary
on the Fragments
with an Introduction



CARL A. HUFFMAN

Aristoxenus of Tarentum: the *Pythagorean Precepts* (*How to Live a Pythagorean Life*)

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The *Pythagorean Precepts* by Aristotle's pupil, Aristoxenus of Tarentum, present the principles of the Pythagorean way of life that Plato praised in the *Republic*. They are our best guide to what it meant to be a Pythagorean in the time of Plato and Aristotle. The *Precepts* have been neglected in modern scholarship, and this is the first full edition and translation of and commentary on all the surviving fragments. The introduction provides an accessible overview of the ethical system of the *Precepts* and their place not only in the Pythagorean tradition but also in the history of Greek ethics as a whole. The Pythagoreans thought that human beings were by nature insolent and excessive and that they could only be saved from themselves if they followed a strictly structured way of life. The *Precepts* govern every aspect of life: e.g., procreation, abortion, child-rearing, friendship, religion, desire and even diet.

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For Alex

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Preface

Since the only detailed studies of Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* ever completed are two German dissertations written in Latin early in the twentieth century (see [Chapter 8](#)), little apology seems necessary for presenting the scholarly world with a full study of them here. Indeed, the *Pythagorean Precepts* are particularly important in light of scholarship on Pythagoras in the last fifty years, which has generally recognized, following Burkert's epoch-making study (1972), that Pythagoras was not the great mathematician and scientist that he became in later antiquity and was, instead, most important as a founder of a way of life. In Plato's only mention of Pythagoras, Socrates identifies him as especially beloved as a leader in education and goes on to remark that his followers still stood out among others for a way of life they called Pythagorean (*Resp.* 600a–b). Thus, when writing the *Republic* a hundred years after the death of Pythagoras, Plato knew of Pythagoreans of the late fifth or early fourth century who lived a distinctive Pythagorean life. It is precisely these Pythagoreans who were Aristoxenus' teachers and associates when he came from Tarentum to the Greek mainland in the middle of the fourth century before he joined Aristotle's Lyceum. In the *Pythagorean Precepts* Aristoxenus presents the principles that governed the way of life of his Pythagorean friends, the Pythagoreans whom Plato found so remarkable in the *Republic*.

Different readers will want to make use of this volume in different ways. The hardy specialist in ancient Pythagoreanism should read it through from cover to cover. The reader who wants to find out the nature of this Pythagorean way of life without getting into the scholarly details should read [Chapters 1](#) and [2](#) in order to get a brief idea of the nature of the evidence for the *Precepts*, then go immediately to the reconstructed text of the *Pythagorean Precepts* in [Chapter 11](#) and read through that text in English and finally turn to [Chapter 10](#) for a discussion of the ethical system of the *Precepts*. The reader who wants an overview of previous scholarship on the *Precepts* and a critical discussion of what has been the standard interpretation of them should then see [Chapters 8](#) and [9](#). Those wanting to delve further into the

problems encountered in reconstructing the text should read [Chapters 3–6](#).

The bulk of the volume is taken up with the detailed commentary on the individual fragments that is the basis for the more general discussion in the Introduction. In that commentary I have several goals. First, in each case I have provided a discussion of the evidence that the fragment in question does derive from the *Pythagorean Precepts* and to what extent, if any, it has been altered in transmission. These questions of authenticity are discussed in [Chapters 4 and 5](#) but are treated in more detail in the commentaries on individual fragments. Second, I have provided close examination of the language of the fragments to see to what extent that language is representative of the fourth-century Greek of Aristoxenus' time and to what extent it has been influenced by Platonic and Aristotelian ideas as well as the much later Greek of authors such as Iamblichus. This study reveals that the language is overwhelmingly that of Aristoxenus' time, with little specific Platonic or Aristotelian influence, but with some admixture of later language added in transmission by Iamblichus or others. Third, I have tried to elucidate the meaning of each fragment and evaluate its contribution to the Pythagorean tradition and the Greek philosophical tradition as a whole. In carrying out the research on the language of the fragments I relied heavily on that wonderful research tool, the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, and would like to thank the Project Director, Maria Pantelia, for her invaluable help.

I have been working on this book for over ten years and it would not have been possible to complete it without generous grants from a series of sources. First I would like to thank my home institution, DePauw University, for awarding me a Janet Risi Faculty Fellowship for 2005–8 and a University Professorship in 2009–13 both of which gave me released time for work on the project. The National Endowment for the Humanities allowed me to get the project off to a good start with a fellowship in 2002–3. In 2008–9 I received a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies, which allowed me to complete later stages of the work. During part of the tenure of the ACLS Fellowship I was a visitor at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and benefited greatly from the wonderful scholarly atmosphere there, which was particularly fostered by Heinrich von Staden. Numerous scholars have helped me with my project, but I owe a particular debt to Myles

Burnyeat and Charles Kahn. My wife, Professor Martha Rainbolt, has read the entire manuscript and has saved me from many errors as well as providing loving encouragement. I could not have completed this project without her support. I would like to thank Michael Sharp, Mary Bongiovi and Gillian Cloke at Cambridge University Press for all their hard work in making this book possible. I dedicate this book to my mentor and friend Alex Mourelatos.

Abbreviations

CAG	1882–1909. <i>Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca</i> . Berlin: Reimer.
DG	Diels, H. 1879. <i>Doxographi Graeci</i> . Berlin: De Gruyter.
DK	Diels, H. 1951. <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> . 6th edn. W. Kranz. Berlin: Weidmann.
FGrHist	Jacoby, F. 1923–. <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> . Berlin: Weidmann; Leiden: Brill.
FHSG	Fortenbaugh, W., Huby, P., Sharples, R., and Gutas, D. (eds.) 1992, repr. with corrections 1993. <i>Theophrastus of Eresus: Sources for His Life, Writings, Thought and Influence</i> . Leiden: Brill.
LSJ	Liddell, H. G. and Scott, R. 1968. <i>A Greek–English Lexicon</i> , revised by H. S. Jones and R. McKenzie. Oxford: Clarendon.
OCD	Hornblower, S., Spawforth, A. and Eidinow, E. (eds.) 2012. <i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> . 4th edn. Oxford University Press.
SEP	Zalta, Edward N. (ed.) <i>Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> . http://plato.stanford.edu/
TLG	Pantelia, M. (ed.) 1972–. <i>Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i> . http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu
W	Wehrli, F. 1967. <i>Die Schule des Aristoteles: Texte und Kommentar</i> . vol. 2. <i>Aristoxenus</i> ² . Basel: Schwabe.

Part I

Introduction

1 | Evidence for the Work: the Excerpts Preserved in Stobaeus

Although the *Suda* tells us that Aristoxenus composed an astounding 453 works (fr. 1 Wehrli), only two treatises have come down to us in the manuscript tradition and both are works on musical theory, i.e. some pages from the second book of *Rhythmics* and the *Elementa Harmonica*, which appears to combine two or more different works by Aristoxenus (Barker 2007: 113–35). No list of Aristoxenus’ writings survives from antiquity. Accordingly, we don’t know the titles of most of Aristoxenus’ works. Apart from the two treatises handed down in the manuscript tradition, the titles that we do have are all derived from later authors, who either mention the titles in passing or give them when quoting a passage from Aristoxenus. The only explicit evidence we have for the existence of a work entitled Πυθαγορικαὶ ἀποφάσεις (*Pythagorean Precepts*) written by Aristoxenus are the lemmata which introduce seven excerpts from the work in Stobaeus’ large anthology of excerpts of both prose and poetry, which he collected for the edification of his son, probably in the early fifth century AD. In six of the seven cases (frs. 1–3 and 5–7) the lemma is identical: Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων (from the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus). In the seventh case (fr. 4), the slightly different form of the lemma appears to be the result of a corruption of the form used in the other six.¹ Sections of Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* are in part virtually identical to parts of the passages quoted in Stobaeus and hence are rightly regarded as coming from Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts* (e.g., frs. 8–9 = 33 and 38W). Still other passages in *On the*

¹ The lemma reads “from the (writings) of Aristoxenus the Pythagorean” (Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορείου). This formulation is odd both because no title is given and because Aristoxenus is most unusually called a Pythagorean. It seems likely that at some point in the transmission a copyist mistakenly thought that Aristoxenus was being called a Pythagorean and consciously or unconsciously changed Πυθαγορικῶν to Πυθαγορείου to agree with Ἀριστοξένου. The final word was then either inadvertently dropped or purposely omitted because it was not seen as a title but rather as referring to generic “assertions” of Aristoxenus that could have come from a number of books.

Pythagorean Way of Life, which are not paralleled in Stobaeus, show such similarity in form and content to the material in Stobaeus that it is very likely that they come from the *Precepts* as well (see Chapter 4). Nonetheless, Iamblichus never indicates that he is quoting from anyone in any of these sections of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* and never directly mentions the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus, so Stobaeus remains our only explicit evidence for the *Pythagorean Precepts*.

2 | The Title and Nature of the Work

The title Πυθαγορικοί ἀποφάσεις is commonly translated *Pythagorean Sayings* (Dillon and Hershbell 1991: 7) or *Pythagorean Maxims* (Kahn 2001: 70; Barker OCD), although a number of scholars have preferred not to translate it (Wehrli 1967, Burkert 1972, Minar 1942: 99). The word ἀπόφασις has two quite distinct meanings (LSJ s.v.), one derived from ἀπόφνημι (in its meaning “to deny”) and the other from ἀποφάινω (“show forth,” “declare”). In Plato and Aristotle, the word is almost always used to mean negation or denial. Nothing in the content of the fragments of Aristoxenus’ work suggests that *Pythagorean Negations* would be an appropriate title, however. It is almost certain, then, that in Aristoxenus’ title the word is related to ἀποφάινω and means something like assertion, utterance, saying or the opinion, thesis, or judgment affirmed in that utterance. A search of Stobaeus reveals that he cites no other works with ἀπόφασις in the title. A search of Diogenes Laertius yields only one such book title, a work of Theophrastus entitled *On Affirmation and Negation* (Diog. Laert. 5.44.10), in which the word must mean “negation” because it is paired with κατάφασις, i.e. “affirmation.” Diogenes Laertius (1.41) uses the word, not as a title of a book, to refer to the “utterances” of the seven sages, which are reported in various ways and ascribed now to one person and now to another. This usage suggests that ἀπόφασις had the connotation of the short saying or maxim typical of the seven sages. Elsewhere in Diogenes, it is used of the judgments that good skeptics are supposed to suspend (4.28.4; 9.74.6). These usages indicate that ἀπόφασις did not refer to the simple verbal act of saying or uttering but rather to the content of what was uttered. In one of two cases in Aristotle where the word does not mean negation, it is used to refer to the views of previous thinkers that Aristotle examines before stating his own view (*Metaph.* 1073a16). All of these uses suggest that at one extreme the term might simply mean assertions or judgments on any philosophical topic and at the other refer specifically to the pithy

assertions of moral content that can be indicated by the translation “maxim” or “saying.”

There is one more vital text for the meaning of the term in a Pythagorean context. Although Iamblichus never refers to a work of Aristoxenus with the title Πυθαγορικαὶ ἀποφάσεις, in [Chapter 22](#) of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (VP 101), he does report that “another mode of education has been handed down through the Pythagorean ἀποφάσεις, both those which apply to our way of life and those which apply to the preconceptions of men.” This is the only place in the Pythagorean tradition, apart from the lemmata to the fragments of Aristoxenus preserved by Stobaeus, in which the term ἀπόφασις appears so that it seems extremely likely that what Iamblichus says here is ultimately based on Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts* (see the commentary on fr. 11 below). Even if Iamblichus were not drawing specifically on Aristoxenus and were referring to a general Pythagorean method of using ἀποφάσεις in education, what Iamblichus says here would provide insight into the meaning of the title of Aristoxenus’ book. Iamblichus indicates that the ἀποφάσεις had two applications: 1) to the way we live our lives and 2) to human preconceptions, which probably means the typical human beliefs on the basis of which we make decisions on how to live our lives. The first example of an ἀπόφασις which Iamblichus gives is the injunction that we should remove all rivalry and competition from friendship, and this is followed by a series of other injunctions about friendship (fr. 11).

The extracts from Aristoxenus’ *Precepts* that are given by Stobaeus appear to fit Iamblichus’ characterization of Pythagorean teaching through precepts quite well. In five of the seven extracts preserved in Stobaeus there is either a direct (frs. 1, 2, and 4) or strongly implied (frs. 5 and 6) command as to how we should live our lives. For example, fragment 1 begins with the injunction “after what belongs to the gods and the divine pay most attention to parents and laws,” fragment 2 asserts “it [is] necessary to suppose that there is no greater evil than anarchy,” and fragment 4 enjoins that “what is called ‘precocious’ should be avoided.” These commands are backed up with some argumentation, and the other two extracts, which do not express or imply a command, appear to be derived from such passages of argumentation on which commands were based (frs. 3 and 7). These passages fit the second characteristic of precepts mentioned by Iamblichus in that they examine

human preconceptions in areas that are important to human life. Thus, fragment 3 carries out an analysis of the concept of desire, which could well form the basis of certain commands about how to deal with our desires. Fragment 7 examines the role of chance in human life by classifying different sorts of luck and fragment 5, in characterizing “true love of beauty,” provides a criticism of typical beliefs about what is “beautiful” or “fine.”

Since Iamblichus’ description of the use of ἀποφάσεις in Pythagorean education fits so well with what Stobaeus preserves of Aristoxenus’ work and since this section of Iamblichus is likely to be based on Aristoxenus (see the commentary below on fr. 11), it is not unreasonable to take what Iamblichus says as a partial guide to the nature of Aristoxenus’ work. Iamblichus’ evidence leads to the conclusion that by ἀποφάσεις Aristoxenus did not mean simply assertions or judgments on just any topic but that he meant judgments put in the form of commands about how we ought to live our lives, which are often developed in opposition to the way people have lived. The translation “precept” captures the moral content of these judgments and their quasi-command form better than “sayings” or “maxims,” which indicate assertions of ethical import but which put less emphasis on their role as commands.

3 | The Format and Style of the Work

The *Precepts* have a distinctive style and format that is largely determined by their nature as described above. In identifying the notable features of their style, it is important to start just from the evidence provided by the extracts explicitly identified as from the *Precepts* by Stobaeus. These stylistic features can then be used to help identify passages in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* that derive from the *Precepts* even though Iamblichus does not explicitly identify their source. The following are the primary stylistic and formal features of the seven fragments of the *Precepts* (frs. 1–7) preserved under Aristoxenus' name in Stobaeus:

1) Aristoxenus appears to have presented the *Pythagorean Precepts* as what the Pythagoreans as a group said or thought rather than what Pythagoras himself said. The evidence is complicated, however, and needs careful consideration. In five of Stobaeus' seven excerpts the precepts are introduced exclusively by third person plural verbs in the imperfect tense (frs. 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7), comprising ten of the fourteen total such verbs.¹ The *Precepts* are presented as what "they, [i.e. the Pythagoreans], used to say, think, believe or suppose" (ἐδοκίμαζον, ᾤοντο, ἐφρόνουν, ἡγοῦντο, ὑπελάμβανον, ἔλεγον, ἔφασκον [4]). In two of the excerpts (frs. 4 and 5) the third person singular is used a total of four times, three times in the imperfect and once in the present. In these cases the natural assumption is that the subject was understood to be Pythagoras himself.

There are two obvious ways to explain this evidence. First, Aristoxenus could have presented the precepts in two ways, sometimes assigning them to the Pythagoreans in general and sometimes to Pythagoras himself. However, there are difficulties with this suggestion. First, it is hard to see how Aristoxenus, who was born more than

¹ In fragment 3, Hense rightly follows two manuscripts and the parallel passage in Iamblichus (VP 205) in reading the plural. One manuscript does read the singular.

a hundred years after Pythagoras' death, would know which precepts went back to Pythagoras and which belonged to more recent Pythagoreans. Second, even if he could make this distinction, it seems unlikely that Aristoxenus would shift back and forth from the singular to the plural unless he wanted to contrast the precepts of Pythagoras himself from the precepts of his followers and there is no evidence in the excerpts in Stobaeus or elsewhere that he ever made such a contrast. There are reports in the later Pythagorean tradition that some groups of Pythagoreans ascribed all their discoveries back to the master (Iambl. *VP* 158 and 198), but if this is what Aristoxenus was doing, we would expect all the uses to be third person singular.

The second possibility is that Aristoxenus, in fact, used the third person plural forms throughout and that the relatively few third person singular forms have been introduced into the text in the process of transmission. Certainly Pythagoras' fame grew ever greater with the passage of time. While Aristotle and his pupil Eudemus rarely refer to Pythagoras himself and almost always refer to the Pythagoreans in the plural (Huffman 2014b: 278), Neopythagoreans starting in the first century BC show a strong tendency to speak primarily of the master in the singular. Thus, in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* Iamblichus' focus is on the sayings and doings of Pythagoras himself. It is, therefore, quite plausible that Aristoxenus followed the same procedure as his teacher Aristotle and his contemporary Eudemus in speaking of the Pythagoreans in the plural and that the singular forms were introduced consciously or unconsciously in the course of transmission when the focus was more and more on Pythagoras himself.

That this second possibility is, in fact, what happened is strongly supported by closer examination of the three uses of the singular in fragment 4. This fragment is one of the excerpts from Stobaeus that is closely paralleled in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. It is striking that in the parallel passage in Iamblichus these three verbs are all in the plural rather than the singular (*VP* 209–11). This use of the plurals cannot be ascribed to some proclivity for plurals on Iamblichus' part, since his practice is exactly the reverse. Iamblichus' general procedure is to present what Pythagoras himself thought or said; the introduction of passages which instead report what the Pythagoreans as a group said or thought leads him to construct awkward transition sentences in several places (e.g., *VP* 213, 174). Thus, Iamblichus should welcome the use of

singular verbs, if they occurred in the *Precepts*, and not change them to the plural. Indeed, if he had found a mixture of singulars and plurals in the *Precepts*, he might have felt justified in presenting all of his reports from them in the singular. Thus, the use of the plurals in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* 209–11 is strong evidence that, in the texts of Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* available to Iamblichus, the singulars found in fragment 4, as preserved in Stobaeus, were plurals. Since the plural uses preponderate elsewhere in the Stobaeus excerpts, it seems reasonable to suppose that in this case Iamblichus is preserving the original plurals and that in transmission the singular came to replace the plural in the Stobaeus text. If fragment 4 originally used the plural, as is suggested by the parallel text in Iamblichus, then thirteen of the fourteen verbs of saying and thinking in Stobaeus' extracts would be plurals. The lone remaining use of the singular, in fragment 5, thus looks ever more likely to be a conscious or unconscious corruption introduced in the later tradition. It thus seems likely that all of the precepts were governed by third person plural verbs with the Pythagoreans understood as the subject.

This use of the plural in the *Pythagorean Precepts* actually makes a lot of sense in light of the nature of Aristoxenus' own connection to Pythagoreanism. We know that Aristoxenus was born in Tarentum around 375 BC, which is over a hundred years after the death of Pythagoras himself. His connections were with Pythagoreans of the fourth century. He spent the first twenty years of his life in Tarentum, where the leading political and intellectual figure was the Pythagorean Archytas, whose life he wrote. After he came to the Greek mainland, the *Suda* tells us that Aristoxenus was the student of the Pythagorean Xenophilus before becoming the pupil of Aristotle. Xenophilus was from the Thracian Chalcidice but came to live in Athens (Aristoxenus fr. 20a), and it seems likely that Aristoxenus studied with him there. We also know that Aristoxenus associated with four Pythagoreans from Phlius (near Corinth), including the Echebrates mentioned in Plato's *Phaedo* (Diog. Laert. 8.46). Thus, when Aristoxenus reports the precepts of the Pythagoreans he naturally focuses not on Pythagoras himself but rather on the Pythagoreans who served as his earliest teachers. Thus the "they" of the *Precepts* makes good sense as referring to the Pythagoreans with whom Aristoxenus associated as a young man: Xenophilus and the Pythagoreans from Phlius. (For a more

detailed account of this “straightforward” account of the *Precepts* see [Chapter 9](#) below.)

2) All of the *Precepts* are presented in indirect statement after an introductory verb of saying or thinking. The fragments used a wide variety of introductory words. The most common are (emending the plurals in fragments 4 and 5): ἔφασκον (four times), ἔλεγον (four times) and ᾤοντο (two times); ἐδοκίμαζον, ἐφρόνουν, ἤγοῦντο, and ὑπελάμβανον are each used once. It is important to note that all these verbs are used in the past tense and specifically in the imperfect tense, so that they indicate what the Pythagoreans customarily or habitually said or thought. The Pythagoreans are, however, never specified as the subject, which is always an indefinite “they.” Nor are any specific Pythagoreans mentioned anywhere in the fragments.

3) In accordance with the general nature of the *Precepts*, as described in [Chapter 2](#) above, there is an emphasis on phrases commanding what we should do: δεῖν appears six times, four times in fragment 2 and twice in fragment 4, and it probably was present a seventh time in the context of fragment 1. Verbal adjectives ending in -τεος appear twice (fr. 2 and fr. 4).

4) In their role of examining human preconceptions the *Precepts* naturally show an interest in definitions and classifications. Thus desire is defined in fragment 3, and in fragment 5 “love of the beautiful and fine” (φιλοκαλία) is defined in contrast to the common understanding of the term. Two types of luck are defined in fragment 7 and three types of mistaken desire are identified in fragment 3. This classificatory zeal produces a penchant for hierarchies. These appear in the sequence of the divine, parents and laws in fragment 1 and the four ages groups into which human life is divided in fragment 2. There is also a related interest in technical terminology. Thus, in fragment 4, reference is made to “the so-called precocious,” which clearly singles out the term as unusual.

5) Aristoxenus frequently uses the phrase περὶ δέ (“but concerning”) with the genitive case to introduce a new subject about which the Pythagoreans gave precepts. This expression appears in over half (four of seven) of the excerpts of the *Pythagorean Precepts* which are preserved in Stobaeus: 1) “but concerning rulers and the ruled they thought thus”

(fr. 2); 2) “but concerning desire they said the following” (fr. 3); 3) “but concerning generation of children they said the following” (fr. 4); 4) “but concerning luck they said the following” (fr. 7).

6) Another of the stylistic peculiarities of Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts* was the use of the expressions καθόλου μέν or καθόλου δέ in order to mark particularly important general principles. The best translation in the *Precepts* is “as a general rule” (see the commentary on fr. 2, line 1). It appears two times in the relatively small compass constituted by the fragments deriving from Stobaeus, and in Aristoxenus’ only work preserved entire, the *Harmonics*, there are seven uses of the expression (8.10, 11.2, 12.15, 41.13, 44.1, 55.4, 61.13), so that it appears to have been a favorite of his. If we go beyond Stobaeus to Iamblichus, in just this one case, Aristoxenus’ penchant for this expression becomes even clearer. The distribution of the uses of the expression in Iamblichus’ writings is marked. The expression appears only twice in all of Iamblichus’ writings apart from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (*Comm. Math.* 88.17 and in *Nic.* 42.22) so it was clearly not a favorite phrase of his. There are a total of twelve occurrences in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, but those occurrences are not at all evenly spread throughout the text. Almost seventy percent of them (eight uses) appear precisely in sections 200–13 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (201, 203, 204 [2], 206, 207, 209, 212), which is about five percent of the total text. Overlaps with Stobaeus suggest that these sections derive from the *Precepts* and two of the eight uses of καθόλου μέν/δέ in sections 200–13 are in the passages that overlap with fragments 2 and 4, which are derived from Stobaeus. Moreover, of the four uses of καθόλου μέν/δέ in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* outside sections 200–13, two others are also in passages that scholars have for other reasons identified as deriving from Aristoxenus (VP 175 and 182).² Thus, ten of the twelve uses appear in passages which have been argued on independent grounds to derive from Aristoxenus. Of course the mere use of καθόλου μέν/δέ does not show that a passage is from Aristoxenus, since Iamblichus does on occasion use the phrase himself. However, when there are other grounds for thinking that a passage is from the *Precepts* and when καθόλου μέν/δέ is very frequent

² The other two uses are found in sections 90 and 106.

in a short stretch of text as it is in 200–13, this usage is strong confirming evidence that the passage is from the *Precepts*.³

7) The *Precepts* are marked by repeated balanced structure (“not in a counterfeit way . . . but out of conviction”; “not only knowledgeable but also humane . . . not only obedient but also loving” etc., frs. 1, 2, 6), although in some cases such structure, while present, is not followed slavishly (frs. 3 [“an impulse and longing to be filled or for presence of a sensation, or to be emptied and for absence and not to perceive”] and 7 [“those who do something with no prior planning and at random are often successful, while those who do something after planning in advance and taking correct precautions fail”], [“some people are born gifted and with the ability to hit the mark, but others are born dull and with the opposite nature”])).

8) Explanations and arguments for the precepts are frequently given. In fragment 4, a general assertion is followed by a clause introduced by γάρ in which empirical evidence concerning the general behavior of animals and plants is used to show that what is precocious must be avoided. There is a similar use of γάρ later in the fragment as well as in fragments 2, 3, 5 and 7.

9) On the other hand, there is a noteworthy lack of concrete examples for the principles stated in the *Precepts*. Thus fragment 3 gives a careful definition and classification of desires and talks of its many forms but provides no specific examples of desires that fall into those classes. Fragment 4 does give sex as an example of something that should be learned late in life, but this is the exception rather than the rule. Fragment 7 defines types of luck carefully but gives no concrete examples.

³ Staab (2002: 400, n. 984) appears to regard καθόλου μέν/δέ in sections 200–13 as a feature of Iamblichus’ style. However, he fails to note 1) its rarity in Iamblichus’ other works and in passages of the *VP* not derived from Aristoxenus and 2) its appearance in two of the fragments of the *Pythagorean Precepts* preserved by Stobaeus as well as its moderately frequent appearance in the *Harmonics*.

4 | Fragments of the *Pythagorean Precepts* Preserved in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*

It has long been recognized that sections of the fragments identified as from Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* by Stobaeus are preserved, sometimes word for word and sometimes with minor changes, in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. Iamblichus gives no indication that he is drawing on the *Precepts* in these cases, but Iamblichus' general procedure in all of his works is not to identify explicitly the sources on which he is drawing. A clear example is the first sentence of fragment 2, which is derived from Stobaeus and which is repeated word for word but without attribution in section 175 of Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. In the [next chapter](#) of the Introduction I will examine in detail all five cases in which Iamblichus preserves material that Stobaeus ascribes to the *Precepts* in order to show how Iamblichus' and Stobaeus' evidence for the *Precepts* compare. That study will show that Stobaeus usually preserves the most reliable text, although in some cases the text preserved by Iamblichus can correct errors that have crept into the text preserved by Stobaeus. The majority of scholars have recognized, however, that Iamblichus preserves more of the *Precepts* than just the material that is paralleled by Stobaeus. The material paralleled in Stobaeus is often found integrated into a larger passage that clearly derives from the same source both in terms of style and content. Moreover, there are other passages in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* where there is no explicit parallel with the material in Stobaeus but where many of the stylistic peculiarities of the *Precepts* are found so that there can be little doubt that these passages too derive from the *Precepts*.

In his edition of the fragments of Aristoxenus Wehrli (1967) was fairly conservative in including only two passages from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* among the fragments of the *Precepts*. These are sections 174–5 (fr. 33 W) and section 205 (fr. 38 W), although he ends fragment 38 with “etc.” suggesting that he thought some of the material that followed section 205 may also have come from the *Precepts*. He also

gives a cross-reference to sections 209–11 without quoting them at the beginning of fragment 39 (= fr. 4 below). Staab (2002) is even more conservative than Wehrli and recognizes very little material in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* as deriving from the *Precepts*. Most scholars, however, have thought that Wehrli was too cautious and that more material from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* should be regarded as derived from the *Precepts*. Burkert represents the standard view when he identifies sections 101–2, 174–6, 180–3, 200–13 and 230–3 as deriving from the *Precepts* (1972: 101, n. 17). Those, both before and after Burkert, who accept this material, and in some cases even more material, as coming from the *Precepts* include Rohde 1871–2 = 1901, Diels and Kranz 1951 (58D), Timpanaro Cardini 1964, and Dillon and Hershbelle 1991.

My study of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* confirms this consensus so that the material from the *Precepts* preserved in Iamblichus is found below in frs. 8 (VP 174–6), 9 (VP 200–13), 10 (VP 180–3) and 11 (VP 101–2 and 230–3). Each case must be considered on its own merits and I have provided detailed arguments for regarding these passages as deriving from the *Precepts* in the commentaries on the individual fragments.

5 | A Comparison of Stobaeus' and Iamblichus' Evidence for the *Pythagorean Precepts*

Iamblichus and Stobaeus are thus the only two sources in the ancient tradition that preserved fragments from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. In the collection below, frs. 1–7 derive from Stobaeus and frs. 8–11 from Iamblichus. We have seen that there are five cases in which excerpts in Stobaeus, identified as coming from the *Pythagorean Precepts*, correspond closely with passages in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, often agreeing word for word. These are fragments 1–2 and VP 175, fragment 6 and VP 183, fragment 2 (end) and VP 203, fragment 3 and VP 205, and fragment 4 and VP 209–11. There are, however, also some significant differences between the texts of the parallel passages in Stobaeus and Iamblichus. How are these differences to be explained and how should the original text of the *Precepts* be determined, in the light of the divergences between Iamblichus and Stobaeus?

To begin with, it is important to note that Stobaeus and Iamblichus approach the text of the *Precepts* with significantly different goals. Stobaeus is an excerptor, so that he is basically cutting passages out of the *Precepts* or out of an earlier excerptor and pasting them into his collection of excerpts under different subject headings, in order to provide a collection of insightful passages on a given topic for his son. We would thus not expect that he would modify the passages to any significant extent, since they do not need to be fit into any train of thought that Stobaeus himself was developing and since the whole point of Stobaeus' collection is to preserve memorable passages from ancient authors. As Mansfeld and Runia have shown, Stobaeus combines a subservience to the text of the individual extract with a freedom in the way he arranges the extracts under each heading (1997: 269). In a number of cases, we have the original texts that Stobaeus excerpts, so that we are in a position to evaluate his practice as an excerptor. For example, Book 4, [Chapter 1](#) of Stobaeus consists of 161 excerpts under the heading "On the State," including fragment 2 of the *Precepts*. Examination of twenty of these excerpts, whose original text survives

independently of Stobaeus, excerpts from Xenophon, Thucydides and Plato, shows that Stobaeus is a careful excerptor, or relied on careful excerptors, and that, in most cases, the texts he presents are largely identical to what is printed in modern editions of the authors in question. The differences that exist are of the sort that is found between different manuscripts. In rare cases, Stobaeus drops minor words such as articles or prepositions and switches the order of two words. There is no evidence that he rewrote or paraphrased the excerpts. Indeed, although there are some circumstances in which Stobaeus changes extracts a little to fit the arrangement or purpose of his collection, my study of these twenty cases supports the conclusion of Mansfeld and Runia that “in principle the anthologist does not paraphrase or summarize or abridge the text internally” (1997: 208).

Iamblichus has quite different goals from Stobaeus. In *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* and his other works on Pythagoreanism, he is attempting to present a coherent treatment of a given subject rather than a collection of excerpts. It is true, however, that the primary method he uses in composing these works is that of combining extensive excerpts from earlier authors in ways that suit his purposes. In doing so, he very rarely indicates that he is in fact using a passage from another author. Thus, in [Chapter 6](#) of his work *On General Mathematical Science*, he employs extensive passages from Book 7 of Plato's *Republic* and from the *Epinomis* without any indication at all that he is drawing on Plato or the *Epinomis*. It is thus totally in character for Iamblichus, when writing *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, to use excerpts from Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*, without identifying them as such. His use of excerpts is significantly different from Stobaeus' in other ways as well. Rabinowitz, on the basis of detailed study of Iamblichus' use of Plato in several key instances, concludes that Iamblichus is hardly a “servile copyist.” Instead he is “a writer . . . who can grasp and set forth key concepts of a Platonic passage while disregarding unimportant details; who generalizes, omits, and alters whole phrases, sentences and paragraphs; who fills lacunae, meeting problems posed by one Platonic source with solutions derived from others; and who is skillful at subordinating the form and thought of his source to his own protreptic purpose” (Rabinowitz 1957: 59).

Iamblichus' treatment of excerpts thus varies with his purpose in a given passage. Sometimes he stays very close to the original, but in

other cases he can compress the source or expand it. Even in cases where he presents a series of excerpts fairly faithfully, he can reverse the order in which the excerpts appeared in the original text. As an example, consider [Chapter 6](#) of *On General Mathematical Science*. Page 22, lines 5–11 of *On General Mathematical Science* correspond to portions of *Republic* 537c–d. Iamblichus has introduced 7–8 words into the text in order to change the grammatical construction to fit his purposes and he drops four or five of Plato's words for these reasons, and evidently for stylistic reasons, as well as altering two verb forms. Most significantly, after using five lines from Plato's text, he drops ten lines with no indication that he is doing so, before picking up again with another two lines. After adding a sentence of his own composition, Iamblichus then jumps backwards in Plato's text to 536b. He then presents five lines that are essentially identical to Plato except that he changes the word *philosophias* to *philomatheias*. He then jumps backwards in Plato's text again to 527d–e. He adds nine words to connect this excerpt to the last. He then quotes nine lines from 527d–e quite faithfully, adding two words, dropping one word, changing a verb form and the form of a pronoun. He then jumps back yet again to 521c–d, which he joins directly to the last excerpt, changing the first two words of the new excerpt only slightly. The next six lines reproduce Plato's text fairly closely, but Iamblichus drops all indication that the passage was part of a dialogue between Socrates and Glaucon, cutting eleven words for this reason. He also adds one verb and changes the form of one noun and two adjectives, as well as using *philomatheian* instead of *philosophian* again. Iamblichus then jumps forward in Plato's text to 523a and the next six pages of Iamblichus correspond in varying degrees to *Republic* 523a–532c. From 523a to 525b Iamblichus follows Plato's text quite closely, although he omits all the indications of the dialogue form. This involves omitting some sixty words such as “I said,” “he said,” “certainly” etc. Iamblichus adds a few words as well, mostly by injecting references to the *mathemata* in general into Plato's discussion of arithmetic. At page 26, line 2, Iamblichus starts skipping big chunks of Plato's text and presenting his own summary instead, which will borrow short three- to four-word phrases from Plato's text (e.g., 27.6 = 527c; 27.9 = 528d). Basically Iamblichus skips Plato's discussion of all the other sciences after arithmetic, except to borrow a phrase here and

there. He then ends [Chapter 6](#) by quoting Plato's concluding section on the sciences at *Republic* 532b–c fairly accurately before finishing with a sentence of his own. In summary, Iamblichus feels free to put his extracts from Book 7 in an order that differs significantly from that in Plato, he cuts all the dialogic exchanges between Socrates and his interlocutors, frequently changes the grammatical construction of the extracts to fit his purpose, and in general shows a strong tendency to abridge Plato's text, although in rare cases he expands it a little as well.

Iamblichus' use of texts from earlier authors need not be the same in all of his works or in every part of one work. We cannot be sure that his practices in [Chapter 6](#) of *On General Mathematical Science* will be those that he uses in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. One clear similarity, however, is his general tendency not to indicate when he is presenting an excerpt of an earlier author. Beyond this it is difficult to evaluate his treatment of excerpts in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, because most of the sources that he excerpts have been lost. The one major exception is Chapter 26 of *VP*, which is drawn from Nicomachus' *Enchiridion*. Comparison with the text of Nicomachus shows that Iamblichus copied this passage with great fidelity. He did not abridge the text and there are only very minor variations. This is a quite technical passage, so we should not be surprised if Iamblichus thought it best to adhere closely to his model.

Let us now turn to a detailed comparison of the text of the *Pythagorean Precepts* as preserved in Stobaeus and Iamblichus in the five cases in which they overlap. As a model case take Stobaeus 3.10.66 (= fr. 3 of Aristoxenus) and Iamblichus, *VP* 205 (= fr. 9). The first nine lines of Iamblichus correspond so closely to the first five lines of fragment 3 that there can be no doubt that they are based on the same passage in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Stobaeus identifies the passage he is excerpting as from the *Pythagorean Precepts* but, as usual, Iamblichus gives no indication that his material is from Aristoxenus. At the same time there are noticeable differences between these parallel passages. The passage in Iamblichus uses (in Greek) about thirty more words (printed in bold below) and consistently expands the rather terse expressions found in Stobaeus.

Stobaeus 3.10.66 = Aristoxenus fr.

3

But concerning desire they said the following. This experience is complex in its variety and has the most forms. Some desires are acquired and provided from without, but others are born with us. Desire itself is a certain motion of the soul toward [something], an impulse and a longing for filling or for presence of a sensation, or for emptying and for absence and not to perceive.

Iamblichus, VP 205 (= fr. 9)

But concerning **what has received the name bodily** desire they **said that those men** said such things as this. Desire itself is a certain motion of the soul toward [something], an impulse and a longing either for **some** filling or for presence of a sensation **of some things or for a perceptive condition. Desire also arises for the opposites, i.e.** for emptying and for absence and not to perceive **some things**. This experience is complex in its variety **and has pretty nearly** the most forms **of anything in human life. The majority of human** desires are acquired **and produced by the men themselves** wherefore . . .

In place of the five words, which begin the fragment in Stobaeus, "But concerning desire they said the following," there are twelve words in Iamblichus, "But concerning **what has received the name bodily** desire they **said that those men** said such things as this." Four of the extra words come in the odd double indirect statement used by Iamblichus, "they **said that those men** said." The plural verb form, "they said," suggests that Iamblichus did not have this report directly from Aristoxenus, since in that case we would have expected "he [Aristoxenus] said that those men said." The other three added words do not introduce a new idea but rather clarify that the desire in question is bodily desire. Iamblichus also has "such things as this" (τοιαῦτα) rather than Stobaeus' "the following things" (τάδε). Throughout the following lines, the text in Iamblichus shows this same tendency to expand and fill out the much sparer text in Stobaeus, by adding explanatory phrases of two and three words.

In the definition of desire, which is the third sentence in Stobaeus but the second in Iamblichus, Iamblichus' text is again noticeably longer (14 words longer) than Stobaeus'. Desire is defined in the following way in the two texts:

Stobaeus

... a certain motion of the soul toward [something], an impulse and a longing for filling or for presence of a sensation, or for emptying and for absence and not to perceive

Iamblichus

... a certain motion of the soul toward [something], an impulse and a longing either for **some** filling or for presence of a sensation **of some things or for a perceptive condition. Desire also arises for the opposites, i.e.** for emptying and for absence and not to perceive **some things.**

Iamblichus has everything that Stobaeus does but expands the first part of the description and then starts a new sentence to complete the definition. There are three things to note here. In Iamblichus' version there is a consistent pattern of adding the indefinite pronoun, "some ... some things ... some things." Iamblichus' text also adds desire "for a perceptive condition" to desire "for presence of a sensation," which suggests that the author is trying to make a fine distinction between "presence of a sensation" and "a perceptive condition." Finally, while the text in Stobaeus simply adds "for emptying and for absence and not to perceive," the text in Iamblichus adds an explanatory phrase to show that the discussion is now switching to desires opposite to those just discussed, "desire also arises for the opposites, i.e. ..."

The next overlapping sentence between the two sources is the second sentence in Stobaeus and the fourth sentence in Iamblichus.

Stobaeus

... this experience is complex in its variety and has the most forms. Some desires are acquired and provided from without, but others are born with us.

Iamblichus

This experience is complex in its variety and has **pretty nearly** the most forms **of anything in human life. The majority of human** desires are acquired **and produced by the men themselves** ...

The first words of the sentence are virtually identical. In Stobaeus they read "this experience is complex in its variety." Iamblichus moves the adjective "complex in its variety" to the beginning, whereas it is the sixth word in Stobaeus. At the end of the sentence instead of the single adjective "having the most forms," which appears in Stobaeus,

Iamblichus' text has three extra words: "having pretty nearly the most forms of anything in human life." Again the text in Iamblichus qualifies ("pretty nearly") the simple expression in Stobaeus and limits it to a specific sphere ("of anything in human life"). In the following sentence in each text, Iamblichus is again much fuller. Instead of saying with Stobaeus "some desires are acquired," Iamblichus' text says "the majority of human desires are acquired," thus specifying that the desires are "human" and that these sorts of desires are in the majority. Stobaeus then describes these desires as "provided from without" (παράσκευαστάς) while Iamblichus uses a slightly different adjective "produced" (κατεσκευασμένας) and adds the words "by the men themselves" thus spelling out who it is that is responsible for these desires. In Stobaeus the acquired desires are set in simple contrast to other desires, which are natural, in the last three words of the sentence "but others are born with us." In Iamblichus the sentence ends before these last three words and thus the contrast between the acquired and natural desires is not stated at this point. Iamblichus' text then goes on for another ten lines, which are not found in the excerpt in Stobaeus.

The change in the structure of the passage is interesting; the paraphrase in Iamblichus is clearly based on the thought that the definition of desire should come first and Iamblichus therefore moved it to the beginning, so that the fourth sentence in Stobaeus becomes the second and third sentences in Iamblichus. The order in Iamblichus is, in fact, more logical, in that the definition of a desire is given at the beginning before going on to discuss its types. Nonetheless, this order is almost surely not what was in Aristoxenus, since the text in Stobaeus is perfectly intelligible as it is, and it is unlikely that the line would have changed position like this in the process of excerpting. The order in Stobaeus, Aristoxenus' order, sacrifices the logic of putting the definition of desire first, in order to emphasize its varied nature, which is more rhetorically effective.

What, then, can be concluded from the comparison of these two overlapping passages in Stobaeus and Iamblichus? The text of Iamblichus consistently adds brief phrases that clarify and further define the meaning as well as rearranging the order of presentation. It is extremely implausible to suppose that an excerptor like Stobaeus cut out phrases of two and three words every other line when excerpting and rearranged the structure in this way. As has been shown above, Stobaeus simply does not intervene in the text of his excerpts to this degree. It

thus seems overwhelmingly likely that Iamblichus, for his own purposes, thought that Aristoxenus' text was too laconic and chose to flesh it out for clarity's sake. Overall the text in Iamblichus reads like an expansive commentary on the original. Indeed, if we assume that Stobaeus' text preserves the text of Aristoxenus faithfully, the divergences found in Iamblichus' version correspond very well to his practice in dealing with the text of Plato in [Chapter 6](#) of *On General Mathematical Science* as described above. In the case of his use of Aristoxenus, the "they said that they" introductory phrase may indicate that Iamblichus was drawing on a text that was already a paraphrase of Aristoxenus rather than the actual text of Aristoxenus (see the commentary on fr. 9). It is thus impossible to be sure how much of the paraphrase is due to Iamblichus and how much of it is due to this source, but for convenience I will generally speak as if the paraphrase is Iamblichus'. In constituting the text of Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*, the general rule should thus be to begin from the text in Stobaeus and only alter that text on the basis of Iamblichus, where the sense suggests an error in Stobaeus. Most of the divergences between Stobaeus and Iamblichus are likely to be due to Iamblichus' rewriting for his own purposes.

I will now consider more briefly the other four passages where Stobaeus and Iamblichus overlap in order to confirm the conclusions just stated and refine the analysis slightly. Two of these overlaps can be conveniently considered together. There is an overlap between fragment 1 and the first part of fragment 2, derived from Stobaeus, and Iamblichus VP 175–6 (= fr. 8) and another overlap between the end of fragment 2 in Stobaeus and Iamblichus VP 203 (= fr. 9). The last sentence of section 175 of Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* is identical to the first sentence of fragment 2 of Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* as preserved in Stobaeus. Iamblichus does not include the next twelve lines of fragment 2; however, he does use the last four lines of fragment 2, with some minor changes, not in section 175 but much later in section 203. Thus, Iamblichus took sentences that were within twelve lines of each other in Aristoxenus and used them in widely separated sections of his own book. This is not surprising, since the latter part of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* is arranged thematically, discussing each of the moral virtues in turn. Thus, the first sentence of fragment 2 was used as part of the discussion of the virtue of justice, while the last sentence of fragment 2 is used as part of the discussion of temperance.

This is not the only rearranging that Iamblichus does. The sentence from fragment 2, which he uses verbatim in section 175, is, in fact, inserted between two sentences that Stobaeus presents as continuous text and which constitute fragment 1. Here is the text as presented in Iamblichus with the sentence from fragment 2 in bold and the sentences from fragment 1 in regular type:

But after both what belongs to gods and also the divine [they thought it was necessary] to pay most attention to parents and laws and make oneself subject to these, not in a counterfeit way but out of conviction. **As a general rule they thought it necessary to suppose that there is no greater evil than anarchy, for it is not natural for human beings to be saved, if there is no one supervising them.** Those men approved abiding by the customs and laws of their fathers, even if they should be somewhat worse than those of others. (Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, 175–6)

Iamblichus' willingness to rearrange the text of the *Pythagorean Precepts* in these ways, taking a sentence from one part of the work and inserting it into the midst of another part of the work, is very much in accord with his practice in using Plato in *On General Mathematical Science*, as described above. The two sentences of fragment 1 between which Iamblichus sandwiches fragment 2 have also been altered slightly.

Stobaeus 4.25.45 = Aristoxenus fr. 1 Iamblichus, VP 175–6 (fr. 8)
(34 W)

After what belongs to the gods and the divine [they thought it was necessary] to pay most attention to parents and laws, not in a counterfeit way but **conforming oneself to these things** out of conviction. They approved abiding by the customs and laws of their fathers, even if they should be somewhat worse than those of others are.

But after both what belongs to gods and also the divine [they thought it was necessary] to pay most attention to parents and laws, **and make oneself subject to these**, not in a counterfeit way but out of conviction. [Sentence from fr. 2 inserted here.] **Those men** approved abiding by the customs and laws of their fathers, even if they should be somewhat worse than those of others.

The first sixteen words of fragment 1 are virtually identical in the two sources, but Iamblichus, in typical fashion, adds a five word explanatory

phrase, which replaces four words of fragment 1. In the case of the second sentence of fragment 1, which follows the sentence from fragment 2, we have one of the rare cases in which the text of Iamblichus can help in correcting a problem in the text provided by Stobaeus. In Stobaeus there is nothing to govern the datives τοῖς πατρίοις ἔθεσί τε καὶ νόμοις (“the customs and laws of their fathers”), and Iamblichus’ ἐν (“to”) clearly represents what fell out of Stobaeus’ text. On the other hand, the addition of a three-word explanatory phrase and the change from optative to subjunctive in the verb in the text of Iamblichus are surely his additions.

As noted above, the last sentence of fragment 2 in Stobaeus is used by Iamblichus in *VP* 203, far removed from his use of the first sentence of fragment 2 in *VP* 175. Here is the last sentence of fragment 2 in Stobaeus side by side with the parallel text in Iamblichus *VP* 203 with Iamblichus’ additions bolded:

Stobaeus 3.10.66 = Aristoxenus fr. 2
(35 W)

They said that it was necessary, right from childhood, even to have a diet that is well ordered, teaching that order and due proportion are fine and advantageous, but disorder and lack of due proportion are shameful and disadvantageous.

Iamblichus, *VP* 203 (fr. 9)

They said that they often asked and raised a difficulty as to why we accustom children to have a diet that is well ordered **and that has due proportion and declare that** order and due proportion are fine **for them, but their opposites**, disorder and lack of due proportion are shameful, **wherefore . . .**

Iamblichus has here changed the introductory phrase in order to fit the context in *VP* and also uses the double indirect statement that is characteristic of his quotations from *Pythagorean Precepts*: “they said that they often asked . . .” Beyond this altered introduction, Iamblichus, as is typical, also expands the rest of the passage to 28 words in contrast to the 23 words in Stobaeus. Thus, he adds an extra adjective (“and that has due proportion”), specifies for whom (i.e. “for them”) order and proportion are fine, and explicitly identifies disorder and lack of due proportion as “their opposites” rather than simply relying on μέν and δέ to make the contrast, as in Stobaeus. On the other hand, somewhat unusually, Iamblichus has eliminated an extra pair of adjectives which are present in Stobaeus, so that, in Iamblichus, order and due proportion

are just “fine” rather than “fine and advantageous” and their opposites just “shameful” rather than “shameful and disadvantageous.”

A fourth pair of overlapping passages differ from those considered up to this point in that they do not preserve substantial stretches of text that are given verbatim. Nonetheless, it is reasonably clear that section 183 of Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* is based on the material in fragment 6 of Aristoxenus, which is derived from Stobaeus. Here are the two passages with the similar phrases *not* bolded:

Stobaeus, 2.31.119 = Aristoxenus fr. 6 Iamblichus, VP 183 (= fr. 10)
(36 W)

They said also that all learning both of sciences and of arts that was willing was both correct and also attained its end, but when unwilling was both inferior and did not attain its end.

... **they also said that it was necessary that learning that arises correctly comes to be willingly, when both wish it, the teacher and the learner. For, if ever either one of those mentioned resists, the appointed task would not duly reach its end.**

Both passages clearly share the same idea that in order for learning to arise correctly it must arise willingly, while learning undertaken unwillingly does not achieve its goal. There is, moreover, enough verbal similarity to make it likely that the passage in Iamblichus had its ultimate source in Aristoxenus. Thus, learning (τὰς μαθήσεις) appears in both passages as well as forms of the words meaning “willing” (ἐκουσίους Stobaeus, ἐκουσίως Iamblichus), “correct” (ὀρθάς Stobaeus, ὀρθῶς Iamblichus), and “not reaching an end” (ἀτελεῖς Stobaeus, οὐκ ... ἐπιτελεσθῆναι Iamblichus). The original passage has been considerably paraphrased and expanded in Iamblichus, however. Iamblichus introduces the idea that both teacher and student must be willing, whereas Aristoxenus just says that learning must be willing, without specifying that both participants in the process must be willing. The point about learning is part of a broader context in Iamblichus, where proper rule is likewise said to arise only if both the ruler and the ruled are willing. Nothing exactly like this is said in the surviving fragments of Aristoxenus, although fragment 2 makes the point that rulers must be humane and that the ruled must love the rulers. Thus, the parallel between VP 183 and fragment 6 appears to represent the most extreme

case of Iamblichus' paraphrasing of the *Pythagorean Precepts* and using that paraphrase in a new context of his own. The central idea is preserved and the flavor of the original language, but most of the words are Iamblichus' own. More detailed examination of the passage (see the commentary on fr. 10, lines 51–6) suggests another possibility. Several features of the lines suggest that they are by Aristoxenus rather than Iamblichus so that it may be that fragment 6 comes from a separate section of the *Precepts*, and in the passage preserved by Iamblichus in fragment 10 it is Aristoxenus himself who is repeating the central idea of fragment 6 in a different context. Certainty is not possible here so it is perhaps most prudent to regard the passage as following the pattern we see in the others parallels between Iamblichus and Stobaeus and take this as an extreme case of rewriting by Iamblichus.

In the case of the final pair of overlapping passages, VP 209–211 (fr. 9) and the section of Stobaeus labeled fragment 4 below (39 W), there is once again considerable verbatim repetition. A series of complex issues arise here that are important for understanding the relationship between the text of Aristoxenus in Stobaeus and Iamblichus' reworking of that text. In fact, evidence emerges that, while Iamblichus undoubtedly is responsible for many of the changes in the text, he was also starting from a text that had already gone through significant modifications. In what follows, I will not note minor differences between Iamblichus and Stobaeus of the sort already discussed but will rather emphasize only what is of particular importance. I will break the text into sections for ease of comparison, beginning with the first two sentences of fragment 4:

Stobaeus 4.37.4 = Aristoxenus fr. 4 Iamblichus, VP 209 (fr. 9)
(39 W)

Concerning generation of children they said the following:
As a general rule <it is necessary> to guard against what is called "precocious," for neither in the case of plants nor of animals does the precocious bear good fruit, but they need to be prepared in advance of bearing fruit for some

Concerning generation they said that they said the following: As a general rule, they thought that it was necessary to guard against what is called "precocious," for the precocious does not either in the case of plants or animals bear good fruit, <but it is necessary that there be> some time before bearing fruit, so that from bodies that are strong and which have been completed

time, in which time their bodies, having gained full strength and having reached maturity, become able to provide both seeds and fruits. There are many things <in life> in which late-learning is better, as is the case also with the business of engaging in sex.

the seeds and the fruits arise. **It is necessary then to raise both the boys and the girls in toils, exercises and appropriate tests of endurance, supplying food that is in harmony with a life that is devoted to toil, temperance and patient endurance.** Many of the things in human life are such that late-learning is a better thing, among which is also the use of sexuality.

The first eight words are very similar in the two texts but three points merit comment: 1) As is typical, Iamblichus' introduction to the excerpt is more elaborate than we find in Stobaeus, in that Iamblichus has the double indirect statement "they said that they said," where the manuscripts of Stobaeus have simply "he said", 2) I have corrected "he" in Stobaeus to "they" on the basis of Aristoxenus' usual practice and the text of Iamblichus (see the discussion of style above) and 3) After the colon, the grammar in the excerpt in Stobaeus is incomplete and it is reasonable to supply "it is necessary" (δεῖν) from Iamblichus. Thus, in two more instances, the text of Stobaeus can be improved using Iamblichus. After this supplement, the next fifteen words are largely identical in the two sources ("guard against" ... "bear good fruit" – φυλάττεσθαι ... γίγνεσθαι). At this point the grammar is defective, this time in Iamblichus, and three words need to be restored (ἀλλὰ δεῖν γενέσθαι – from Ocellus, see below). The sentence ends with a different grammatical construction in the two sources, but most of the words are the same, although in different cases because of the difference in construction.

At this point Iamblichus introduces a sentence of 29 words (in bold above), which finds no counterpart in Stobaeus. Stobaeus' text makes sense without the sentence, and this might be another example of Iamblichus inserting a whole sentence in what is otherwise a continuous passage of Aristoxenus. Given his practice in other cases, it is reasonable to suppose that Iamblichus might be inserting a sentence of Aristoxenus from elsewhere in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Close analysis of the vocabulary of the sentence (see the detailed commentary on these lines) shows that the language is all paralleled in the fourth century and that none of it is uniquely Iamblichean. It is notable that the sentence mentions the training of both boys and girls, but there is precedent for

this in the Pythagorean tradition, which gave an unusually prominent role to women, and in the discussion of desire earlier in lines 100–2, where the desires of women are mentioned as well as those of men. As we have seen above, such insertions and reorderings by Iamblichus lead to changes elsewhere in the text. The previous sentence emphasized avoiding what is precocious, in part, because good fruits do not arise from bodies that are not strong and fully developed. The inserted sentence talks about toils, exercises and tests of endurance for the young, which can be seen as explaining how the bodies become strong and developed. The emphasis on temperance and endurance in the sentence, however, also suggests that the goal is to keep the minds of the young off sexuality. This latter idea is explicitly mentioned two sentences later in Stobaeus, where it is asserted that the young should be brought up so “busy with training” (διὰ τῶν ἀσκημάτων ἀσχόλους) that they do not even know about sex until age twenty. Strikingly, Iamblichus cuts out precisely the words that make this point (διὰ τῶν ἀσκημάτων ἀσχόλους) at the corresponding part of his text, presumably because he has already inserted a sentence from elsewhere in the *Precepts* that deals with training in more detail. Although it is possible that Iamblichus inserted the sentence as just suggested, unique features of the Greek text suggest another equally plausible explanation. The sentence in question may have been in Aristoxenus' text and fell out of Stobaeus' text due to a copyist's error (see the commentary on section 6 of fr. 9). The sentence following the sentence missing in Stobaeus is essentially the same in the two sources but with a number of minor differences in detail, many of which are to be explained by Iamblichus' penchant for fuller expression, since his sentence has 22 words as opposed to 18 in Stobaeus. As transmitted, the text in Stobaeus is defective, and the text of Iamblichus suggests that βίῳ (“in life”) should be inserted.

Starting with the last sentence of the last section for context, here are the next sections of the parallel texts for comparison:

Stobaeus, 4.37.4 = Aristoxenus fr. 4
(39 W)

There are many things <in life> in which late-learning is better, as is the case also with the business of engaging

Iamblichus, VP 209–10 (fr. 9)

Many of the things in human life are such that late-learning is a better thing, among which is also the use of

in sex. It is necessary, then, that they be brought up so busy with training while still children, that not only do they not seek it, but, if possible, that they not even know of such intercourse until they are twenty.

Whenever the children have reached even this age, they must rarely engage in sex. For, this contributes considerably to the good condition both of those that are begetting and of those who are going to be begotten.

sexuality. It is necessary, then, that the children be so brought up that they not seek such intercourse until they are twenty. Whenever the children have reached this age, they must rarely engage in sex. This will be the case if good condition is regarded as something honored and fine. For intemperance and good condition do not at all arise at the same time in the same individual.

The second sentence starts the same way in each text, "it is necessary, then," but the rest of the sentence is somewhat surprising in that it is Stobaeus' text that is fuller and Iamblichus' which is simpler. In part this simplification is only apparent since, as we have seen, Iamblichus may have replaced the words "busy with training" with a whole sentence, which he has inserted earlier. Iamblichus does, however, omit one important idea found in Stobaeus' version of the sentence. While agreeing with the text of Stobaeus that the young should not have sexual intercourse before twenty, he omits Stobaeus' additional point that, ideally, the young should not even have heard about intercourse before that age. The next sentence, eleven words that assert that even after age twenty the young should rarely engage in intercourse, is identical in the two texts, except that Iamblichus omits "even." Stobaeus then adds a sentence giving as a reason for seldom having intercourse that this practice contributes to the good condition (εὖεξις) of both those begetting and those begotten. There is no exact parallel for this sentence in Iamblichus. The next two sentences in Iamblichus do, however, deal with the concept of "good condition" (εὖεξις), which is the central idea in Stobaeus' sentence. Iamblichus makes the assumptions in Aristoxenus' assertion explicit and constructs an argument for that assertion: good condition is something that should be valued and, if it is valued, the young will rarely engage in sex, since good condition cannot exist in the presence of intemperance. In this case, Iamblichus is, in effect, giving an interpretive commentary on the text of Aristoxenus as preserved in Stobaeus.

At this point, Iamblichus uses his typical double indirect statement ("they said that they") to introduce about twelve lines of material that is not found in Stobaeus. The text in Stobaeus also reintroduces the indirect statement at this point ("they said also . . . "). Although the "they said" belongs to Aristoxenus, it is possible that its presence here indicates that two excerpts are being joined at this point by Stobaeus and that he left out material in between, which corresponds to what is found in Iamblichus. This is far from certain, however, since Iamblichus, in accordance with his typical practice, could have taken material from elsewhere in the *Precepts* and inserted it here or introduced material of his own composition. At the end of the twelve-line passage, Iamblichus does produce text ("not taking one's fill of food . . . nor . . . when drunk") that is again close to the next sentence in Stobaeus ("when full of food and strong drink"). Here are the parallel passages with the language in Iamblichus that is similar to Stobaeus in bold:

Stobaeus 4.37.4 = Aristoxenus Iamblichus, VP 210–12 (fr. 9)
fr. 4 (39 W)

They said also that one should not associate with women for reproduction when full of food and strong drink. For they did not think that, from a temperament that is base and discordant and disordered, well-proportioned and beautiful things arise, but things that are not at all good.

They said that they also praised the following sorts of customs, which existed before their time in the Greek cities: not to have intercourse with mothers, nor a daughter, nor a sister, nor in a temple, nor in public. For it is fine and advantageous that as many hindrances to this activity as possible arise. But those men used to suppose, as it seems, that it was necessary to strip away both engenderings that are contrary to nature and also those that arise by violence or excess and to leave alone the engenderings, among those which arise according to nature and with temperance, which arise for the purpose of temperate and lawful production of children. And they supposed that it was necessary that those producing children give great forethought for their future offspring. The first and greatest precaution is that one bring oneself to the production of children having lived and still

living in a temperate and healthy way, **not taking one's fill of food** at the wrong time nor eating the sort of things from which the condition of bodies becomes worse, **nor indeed, when drunk**, but then least of all. For they thought that **from a temperament that is base and discordant and disordered** the seeds become unsound.

From Stobaeus' simple "They said also that one should not associate with women for reproduction when full of food and strong drink" Iamblichus produces the much more complicated "The first and greatest precaution is that one bring oneself to the production of children having lived and still living in a temperate and healthy way, not taking one's fill of food at the wrong time nor eating the sort of things from which the condition of bodies becomes worse, nor indeed, when drunk, but then least of all." This transformation suggests that the preceding sentence in Iamblichus is also elaboration introduced into the text of Aristoxenus by Iamblichus, since the language of "forethought" and "precaution" originated in this preceding sentence. On the other hand, the first three sentences in this section of Iamblichus are unified around the idea of the contrast between natural/temperate and unnatural/intemperate engenderings (e.g., incest and sex in public). This idea is not unrelated to the idea in the next two sentences that one engendering children should do it in the best possible bodily state, but there is no necessary connection, so the first three sentences in Iamblichus may have a different origin than Iamblichus' paraphrase in the next three sentences and are probably an insertion taken from elsewhere in the *Precepts* (see the commentary on fr. 9).

After making the point about avoiding excessive food and drink before sex, Iamblichus' next sentence is much closer to the last half of the final sentence in fragment 4. Although there are divergences at beginning and end, the words in the middle ("from a temperament that is base and discordant and disordered") are identical in the two sentences. Iamblichus has removed the negative from the verb and put it in the predicate. Instead of saying that "they did not think that . . . well-proportioned and beautiful things arise" he has "they thought that . . . the seeds become unsound." He also cuts off the last part of the sentence in Stobaeus, "but things that are not at all good."

Further light is shed on the relationship between Iamblichus' and Stobaeus' version of the *Pythagorean Precepts* by the remarkable fact that the pseudo-Pythagorean treatise by Ocellus Lucanus, *On the Nature of the Universe*, also presents a version of the passage of the *Pythagorean Precepts* which has just been considered. Harder has shown in his edition of Ocellus (1966: 134–43) that Ocellus is much closer to the text in Iamblichus than to that in Stobaeus. I will not repeat all of Harder's analysis here but will draw attention to important results of the comparison of the texts. First it is helpful to compare the beginning lines of all three texts.

Stobaeus 4.37.4 = Aristoxenus fr. 4 (39 W)	Iamblichus VP 209 (fr. 9)	Ocellus, <i>On the Nature of the Universe</i> , 52–3
Concerning generation of children they said the following: As a general rule < they thought that it was necessary> to guard against what is called "precocious," for neither in the case of plants nor animals does the precocious bear good fruit, but they need to be prepared in advance of bearing fruit for some time, in which time their bodies, having gained full strength and having reached maturity, become able to provide both seeds and fruits.	Concerning generation they said that they said the following: As a general rule, they thought that it was necessary to guard against what is called "precocious," for the precocious does not either in the case of plants or animals bear good fruit, <but it is necessary that there be> some time before bearing fruit, so that from bodies that are strong and which have been completed the seeds and the fruits arise. It is necessary then to raise both the boys and the girls in toils, exercises and appropriate tests of endurance, supplying food that is in harmony with a life that is devoted to toil, temperance and patient endurance.	When considering concerning generation it is necessary to do the following: As a general rule it is necessary to guard against everything that is untimely and incomplete, for what is incomplete does not either in the case of plants or animals bear good fruit, but it is necessary that there be some time before bearing fruit, so that from bodies that are strong and which have been completed the seeds and fruits arise. Whence it is necessary to raise the boys and the girls in exercises and appropriate tests of endurance, supplying food that is in harmony with a life that is devoted to toil, temperance and patient endurance.

These lines of Ocellus are clearly based on the same version of the text as Iamblichus. In particular, the purpose clause that begins “so that from bodies . . .” is identical to what is found in Iamblichus, while differing in a number of ways from the corresponding passage in Stobaeus. Moreover, Ocellus never agrees with Stobaeus in opposition to Iamblichus except in one case where the text in Iamblichus is defective,¹ which clearly suggests that Ocellus and Iamblichus are drawing on the same tradition, which is distinct from the tradition on which Stobaeus is drawing. There are also, however, some noticeable differences between Iamblichus and Ocellus. Iamblichus, although he does not identify his source as Aristoxenus, does present the passage in double indirect discourse: “concerning generation they said that they said the following.” Ocellus, on the other hand, does away with any suggestion that he is reporting someone else’s view and presents the view as his own teaching. Thus, he changes the beginning to “when considering concerning generation it is necessary to do the following” and removes Iamblichus’ “they said” from the beginning of the next sentence. More significantly, Ocellus replaces the word *precocious*, which is found in both Iamblichus and Stobaeus and must go back to Aristoxenus with “untimely and incomplete” the first time it occurs and with “what is incomplete” the second time it appears. Aristoxenus knew that he was using an unusual expression, since he uses the expression “what is called precocious” (τὸ καλούμενον προφερές) the first time he uses the word. This indicates that he is using the expression that the Pythagoreans employed but also that he recognizes that it is odd. The Greek word used, *προφερός*, is indeed unusual in this meaning (see LSJ s.v.). Ocellus evidently found the expression too odd to want to claim as his own, and replaced it with the tamer “untimely” or “incomplete.” Thus these first lines show that Ocellus was following the same source as Iamblichus but introduced changes into that source both to fit the context in his own treatise and to remove unusual terminology. Ocellus then agrees with Iamblichus again in introducing the sentence about the tests of

¹ As we have seen above, when comparing Iamblichus and Stobaeus, Iamblichus’ text is defective in the third and fourth lines. Ocellus, on the other hand, has the complete text here and agrees with Stobaeus in reading *ἀλλά* which is missing in Iamblichus. In reading *δεῖν γενέσθαι*, however, Ocellus differs from Stobaeus and Iamblichus’ text should be completed on the basis of Ocellus because of the similarity of Iamblichus and Ocellus in the rest of the passage.

endurance for boys and girls, which is not found in Stobaeus. Ocellus' version of this sentence is almost identical to that of Iamblichus, differing only in omitting three minor words and adding one.

In the following section on late learning Ocellus again agrees with the version in Iamblichus rather than that in Stobaeus:

Stobaeus 4.37.4 = Aristoxenus fr. 4 (39 W)	Iamblichus, <i>VP</i> 209–10 (fr. 9)	Ocellus, <i>On the Nature of the Universe</i> 54
There are many things <in life> in which late-learning is better, as is the case also with the business of engaging in sex. It is necessary, then, that they be brought up so busy with training while still children, that not only do they not seek it, but, if possible, that they not even know of such intercourse until they are twenty. Whenever the children have reached even this age, they must rarely engage in sex. For, this contributes considerably to the good condition both of those that are begetting and of those who are going to be begotten.	Many of the things in human life are such that late-learning is a better thing, among which is also the use of sexuality. It is necessary, then, that the children be so brought up that they do not seek such intercourse until they are twenty. Whenever the children have reached this age, they must rarely engage in sex. This will be the case if good condition is regarded as something honored and fine. For intemperance and good condition do not at all arise at the same time in the same individual.	Many of the things in human life are such that late-learning is a better thing. Wherefore also with regard to the use of sexuality, it is necessary, then, that the children be so brought up that they do not seek after such usage before they are twenty, but even when they have used it that they use it rarely. This will be the case if they regard good condition and temperance as fine and honored.

In particular, Ocellus, like Iamblichus, leaves out the suggestion in Stobaeus' version that the young should not even know about sexuality before the age of twenty. Ocellus again differs from Iamblichus in a number of minor ways, which make the passage slightly shorter, and omits a whole sentence at the end of the section, incorporating one idea, temperance, from it into his last sentence. He does not use indirect discourse, since he is presenting the ideas as his own rather than reporting ideas of others. Thus he uses finite verbs rather than infinitives.

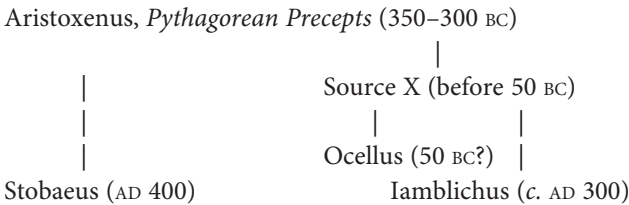
In the next section, Ocellus follows Iamblichus in introducing several lines, beginning with customs about incest, which have no counterpart in Stobaeus. Ocellus maintains the same relation to Iamblichus as has been seen above throughout this passage. His text agrees with Iamblichus in most cases but there are minor changes of a word or two. At the end he does introduce a sentence that is found neither in Iamblichus nor Stobaeus. Stobaeus and Iamblichus then overlap again, with Ocellus again agreeing with Iamblichus, while introducing minor changes:

Stobaeus 4.37.4 = Aristoxenus fr. 4 (39 W)	Iamblichus, VP 211 (fr. 9)	Ocellus, <i>On the Nature of the Universe</i> 56
For they did not think that from a temperament that is base and discordant and dis- ordered, well-proportioned and beautiful things arise, but things that are not at all good.	... from a temperament that is base and discordant and disordered the seeds become unsound.	... from constitutions that are base and discordant and disordered the seeds become unsound.

At this point, the fragment of Aristoxenus in Stobaeus ends but Ocellus and Iamblichus go on for another paragraph still agreeing basically, although differing more significantly on a few points.

There can be little doubt, then, that the text in Ocellus and the text in Iamblichus are ultimately based on the same source, which was changed by both authors for their own purposes. Did either of them use the other? If not, what can be said about their common source? Ocellus' treatise is explicitly mentioned by Philo (*On the Eternity of the World* 12), who was active in the first half of the first century AD (Dillon 1977: 139), so that the treatise cannot be later than that date. The treatise is also mentioned by Censorinus in the third century AD in *On the Birthday* (4.3). This work of Censorinus is primarily derived from Suetonius and Varro, and it may be that the section referring to Ocellus in fact goes back to Varro (116–27 BC). In this case, the treatise of Ocellus would have been available already in the first century BC and could have been composed even earlier. Whichever of these dates is assigned to Ocellus' treatise, it was clearly earlier than Iamblichus (c. AD 245–c. 325), and thus the similarities between it and Iamblichus cannot be explained by assuming that Ocellus drew on Iamblichus. On the other hand, since Iamblichus has

many other passages ultimately derived from the *Pythagorean Precepts* than the one found in Ocellus, Iamblichus must have had a source other than Ocellus for the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Thus, the similarities between Iamblichus and Ocellus are best explained by supposing that they are drawing on a common source. This source cannot be Aristoxenus himself, since, as I have shown above, the comparison between the similar passages in Iamblichus and Stobaeus indicates that the fuller and differently ordered text which is shared by Iamblichus and Ocellus is a reworking of Aristoxenus' original, which is preserved more accurately in Stobaeus. Since Ocellus agrees with Iamblichus in diverging from Stobaeus, it is clear that much of the rewriting of Aristoxenus had already been done before Iamblichus in the case of sections 209–11, and this is presumably true of other passages in Iamblichus as well. Thus, a significant part of the rewriting of Aristoxenus in Iamblichus is due to the source Iamblichus shared with Ocellus rather than to Iamblichus himself.² All that can be said with certainty about this common source is that it must have antedated Ocellus. The following chart represents the likely relationship between the various sources.



Stobaeus evidently used a text that was relatively close to Aristoxenus' original, while Ocellus and Iamblichus independently used a source (source X), which, while quite close to Aristoxenus' original in some passages, in others paraphrased, expanded and restructured the original for its own purposes. Ocellus and Iamblichus then further adapted the text of Aristoxenus that they found in source X.

This study of the relationship between Stobaeus' and Iamblichus' version of the *Precepts* shows two important things about the text preserved by Iamblichus. First, while Iamblichus' text preserves word-for-word fidelity to the text of Aristoxenus in some cases, it also both

² Harder (1966: 141) suggests that there was a common source dating to the second or third century BC and thinks of Hermippus.

changes individual words and adds explanatory phrases so that the text is generally longer than that found in Stobaeus. Moreover, in addition to these changes, Iamblichus frequently alters the order of sentences from the original. Second, despite these divergences from the text of Aristoxenus, in every case examined above, both with regard to the *Precepts* and with regard to Iamblichus' treatment of Plato, Iamblichus portrays the general ideas expressed by the *Precepts* and Plato with reasonable accuracy. So the text preserved in Iamblichus is like a mosaic, where the main outlines of the picture have been clearly preserved and even the most important details. Some parts of the mosaic are constructed of the very tesserae used by Aristoxenus in their original position, but in other parts Iamblichus has repaired the mosaic adding his own tesserae and even rearranging some of the tesserae used by Aristoxenus. One can thus be confident in the general content and most important details of what Iamblichus preserves, even if it is not always possible to determine in the case of specific words and phrases what is Aristoxenus and what is Iamblichus.

6 | The Relationship of the *Pythagorean Precepts* to Aristoxenus' Other Works on the Pythagoreans

Five different titles for works on the Pythagoreans by Aristoxenus have been preserved in the ancient tradition: *The Life of Pythagoras*, *On Pythagoras and His Associates*, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, *Pythagorean Precepts* and *The Life of Archytas*. Certainly our evidence for these titles is very meager and it is possible that some of these are different names for the same book or that Aristoxenus wrote other books on the Pythagoreans whose titles have not been preserved. However, the evidence that does survive for each of these works supports the idea that there were at least five distinct works. The *Pythagorean Precepts* are the best attested work in that they are cited as a source seven different times in Stobaeus (see above). Each of the other works is named only once or, in one case, twice (*On the Pythagorean Way of Life*). Clement of Alexandria is the only source to mention a *Life of Pythagoras* (Πυθαγόρου Βίος) by Aristoxenus (*Strom.* 14.62.2). What he reports, that Aristoxenus said that Pythagoras was a Tyrrhenian, is certainly something that Aristoxenus would have mentioned in a *Life of Pythagoras*. Aulus Gellius cites “the book that Aristoxenus left about Pythagoras” as the source for his reports about Pythagoras eating beans as well as baby goats and pigs (*Attic Nights* 4.11). It seems very likely that this is also a reference to the *Life of Pythagoras* and suggests, as we would have expected, that it included not just a description of the important events in his life but also a description of his own way of life.

Diogenes Laertius (1.118) is the only source to mention the work *On Pythagoras and His Associates* (Περὶ Πυθαγόρου καὶ τῶν γνωρίμων αὐτοῦ). It is possible that this book is identical to the *Life of Pythagoras* described above (see Timpanaro Cardini 1964: 273). However, once again, what is cited from the work, the story of Pythagoras burying his teacher Pherecydes, would fit well in a work of this title. This excerpt from it as well as the title suggest that the work focused on Pythagoras' dealings with his teachers and pupils as well as other people with whom he came into contact. These associates are literally people who were

known (γνώριμοι) to Pythagoras so that the work was probably limited to his lifetime.

Iamblichus mentions the title of a third work, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (Περὶ Πυθαγορικοῦ βίου). He explicitly marks off what he is quoting from the work, and this quotation shows several important things about it (Iambl. VP 233 = Wehrli fr. 31). First, Aristoxenus characterizes some habitual behavior of the Pythagoreans: "they avoided lamentations, tears, and all such things as much as possible; and the same goes also for flattery, entreaty, supplication and all such things." He then illustrates this habitual behavior by providing the specific example of the famous Pythagorean friends Damon and Phintias. Porphyry gives a similar report in his *Life of Pythagoras* (59), and although one manuscript (M) assigns it to Aristoxenus' *Life of Pythagoras*, this is clearly a mistake for *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, which is reported in another manuscript (B). Since the habitual behavior described by Aristoxenus is ascribed to the Pythagoreans rather than to Pythagoras and since Damon and Phintias lived in the fourth century, long after Pythagoras' death, it appears that *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* focused not on Pythagoreans of the time of Pythagoras (his associates) but rather on later Pythagoreans, and probably especially those of the fourth century, who were known directly or indirectly to Aristoxenus himself. Archytas was the most important figure of the first half of the fourth century and Aristoxenus accordingly devoted a separate *Life of Archytas* to him (Athenaeus 12 545a – See Huffman 2005: 307–22).

As we have seen, the evidence for these works is quite limited so that it is impossible to be certain about the nature of Aristoxenus' books on the Pythagoreans. However, the evidence that we do have suggests that he had a well-organized plan of presentation. First came a *Life of Pythagoras*, which not only detailed the main events of his life but also discussed his personal behavior, e.g., his dietary habits. Aristoxenus then chose to devote a separate book to Pythagoras' dealings with others, i.e. *Pythagoras and His Associates*, which evidently dealt with his teachers but also probably included pupils and other famous people. These two works constituted Aristoxenus' presentation of the first Pythagoreans down to the death of Pythagoras in c. 490 BC. Aristoxenus' remaining three works seem to have focused on the Pythagoreans of later times. He wrote a separate account of the most important Pythagorean of his day, Archytas. The remaining two works appear to have approached

fifth- and fourth-century Pythagoreanism in different ways. The treatise *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* described the typical behavior of the Pythagoreans and illustrated this behavior with the actions of individual Pythagoreans. The *Pythagorean Precepts*, on the other hand, set out the moral rules and principles that governed the way of life of one group of Pythagoreans in a systematic fashion but made no attempt to give specific examples. There is evidence that in some cases Aristoxenus did formulate precepts that governed the specific actions described in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (Iambl. VP 96–100), but there is no evidence for any description of typical behavior or specific examples in the *Precepts*, so that the two works were for the most part distinct in purpose.

There are several questions that this understanding of Aristoxenus' program raises. First, there appears to be a gap in his coverage between the death of Pythagoras at the beginning of the fifth century and the first half of the fourth century in which the Pythagoreans whom Aristoxenus specifically mentions (e.g., Damon and Phintias) were active. Did Aristoxenus discuss Pythagoreans of the intervening period including, most notably, Philolaus? Stories about Philolaus and Eurytus were probably included in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* as well, and it may have included all Pythagoreans who lived after the death of Pythagoras. Second, how did the catalogue of Pythagoreans at the end of Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* relate to Aristoxenus' works? It is commonly accepted that, although what Iamblichus presents has been changed in a number of ways, the core of the catalogue is likely to go back to Aristoxenus (Huffman 2008b: 297–9). Zhmud suggested that it was attached to *On Pythagoras and His Associates*, but it clearly includes people that lived long after Pythagoras and thus were not literally his associates. Zhmud uses a passage in Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras* as evidence that Aristoxenus included not just Pythagoras' literal associates but also later generations of Pythagoreans (2012b: 241–2). But that passage (VP 22) probably was composed by Nicomachus rather than Aristoxenus (Huffman 2014b: 292–3). Moreover, it states that Pythagoras “destroyed factionalism not only among his associates but also among their descendants for many generations.” This assertion, even if it were by Aristoxenus, would, *pace* Zhmud, not give any grounds for thinking that Aristoxenus included Pythagoreans who lived several generations after Pythagoras in a work entitled, *On Pythagoras and His Associates*. So it is perhaps best to

conclude that the catalogue of Pythagoreans was attached to Aristoxenus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, which clearly referred to a number of individual Pythagoreans; but certainty is not possible.

The crucial remaining question is exactly how the *Pythagorean Precepts* were related to *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. Before addressing this question, however, we need to get some idea of what was contained in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* and this means identifying the likely fragments from that treatise. In the standard collection of the fragments of Aristoxenus, Wehrli (1967) assigns eight fragments to *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. Wehrli is generally quite conservative in what he includes whereas DK (58D), Timpanaro Cardini (1964) and Mewaldt (1904) include considerably more material. Wehrli's collection is closer to the truth, but it needs some modification as well. Only one fragment certainly belongs to *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. This is fragment 31 Wehrli (= Iambl. VP 233 (middle) – 236). This fragment explicitly mentions both Aristoxenus and the name of the treatise and marks the beginning and the end of the material that is quoted. As we have seen, there are two key things to note about this fragment: 1) Aristoxenus reports the habitual behavior of the Pythagoreans rather than assigning that behavior to Pythagoras himself, and 2) Aristoxenus gave as examples of the behavior the fourth-century Pythagoreans, Damon and Phintias. Fragments 26 and 27 do not mention any specific work of Aristoxenus, but they do mention Aristoxenus by name and report what the Pythagoreans habitually did (used medicine to purify the body and music to purify the soul, fr. 26, ate bread and honey for lunch and therefore lived out their lives without disease, fr. 27), so it seems very probable that they derive from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. Finally, fragment 30 (Iambl. VP 197–8) reports the habitual behavior of the Pythagoreans and while it does not specifically name Aristoxenus or any of his works as the source, it does name Aristoxenus' father, Spintharus, as the source and hence the report is very likely to derive from Aristoxenus. In addition it mentions specific Pythagorean terminology (πεδάρτων) which is mentioned elsewhere in a fragment that is likely to derive from Aristoxenus (Iambl. VP 101). This fragment, like fragment 31, first gives a general description of Pythagorean behavior, i.e. that they never punished or corrected anyone when angry but waited for their rationality to return, and then illustrates that behavior with stories about two fourth-century Pythagoreans, Archytas and Cleinias.

Wehrli assigns four other fragments to *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* but there are good reasons to doubt that they come from this work. In the case of frs. 28, 29a and 29b there is no doubt that they derive from Aristoxenus, since he is mentioned by name in each case. However, in each case what is reported is not the habitual behavior of the Pythagoreans as a group as in frs. 26, 27, 30 and 31 but rather the behavior of Pythagoras himself. It thus seems more likely that they derive from the *Life of Pythagoras* and, indeed, in the case of 29b Wehrli himself includes the main text among the fragments of the *Life of Pythagoras* (fr. 25) and only gives a cross-reference as fragment 29b of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. It may well be that Wehrli assumed that anything said about Pythagoras' way of life would also be included in the way of life of later Pythagoreans, since they presumably considered themselves as deriving their way of life from the master. Nonetheless, the pattern of Aristoxenus' works suggests that he adopted a methodology that treated the evidence for Pythagoras and later Pythagoreans separately and that he reported evidence for Pythagoras himself in the *Life of Pythagoras* and *On Pythagoras and His Associates* and evidence for later Pythagoreans in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* and the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Accordingly frs. 28, 29a and 29b should not be included in the evidence for *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* but rather in the evidence for the *Life of Pythagoras*. Finally, fragment 32 (Plutarch, *Timoleon* 15) is evidently included among the fragments of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* by Wehrli because it gives information that Aristoxenus derived from Dionysius II, the deposed tyrant of Syracuse, just as fragment 31 reported the story of Damon and Phintias on the authority of Dionysius. In this case, however, the information provided concerns Plato's relationship to the tyrant so that it seems far more likely that this fragment derives from Aristoxenus' *Life of Plato* (Dillon 2012: 288–9 and Schorn 2012: 218–19).

Thus a core of fragments in Wehrli (26, 27, 30 and 31) is secure and is accepted also by Mewaldt, Timpanaro Cardini and DK (although DK seems inadvertently not to include fragment 27). Should any of the additional material found in DK, Timpanaro Cardini and Mewaldt be accepted as evidence for *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*? In considering this question it is important to keep in mind that there is a distinction between a text that reports fairly directly what Aristoxenus said in a given work, and which should thus be included among the fragments,

and a text for which Aristoxenus is only one of a number of sources, which cannot be distinguished with clarity, in which case no fragment of Aristoxenus can be identified. DK includes some of the surrounding context for frs. 30 and 31 of Wehrli but in neither case is the argument for doing this compelling. Thus, in the case of fragment 31 DK includes not just Iamblichus *VP* 233–6 but also 237–9 (so also Timpanaro Cardini). It is not clear why they do so, since Iamblichus clearly marks the end of his quotation from Aristoxenus at the end of 236. It is true that, in the further stories of Pythagorean friendship in 237–9, the friendship of Cleinias and Prorus is mentioned and Aristoxenus' father Spintharus is cited elsewhere in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* for a story about Cleinias (fr. 30 = Iambl. *VP* 198). However, we cannot be sure that all stories about Cleinias derive from Spintharus through Aristoxenus. For example, Chamaeleon is cited as the source for one story about Cleinias (Athenaeus 14 624a). Since Chamaeleon lived in the generation after Aristoxenus his report may be based on Aristoxenus but we cannot be sure of this. Some (e.g., DK) also have thought that the stories of friendship in Iamblichus *VP* 127–8 derive from Aristoxenus and the friendship of Cleinias and Prorus is included there. However, the text of *VP* 127–8 is corrupt. It does include the friendship of Damon and Phintias, which is reported by Aristoxenus in a list of Pythagorean friendships, but this need not mean that the reports of all the other friendships derive from Aristoxenus. Rohde thought that Nicomachus was likely to be the source for *VP* 127–8 (1871–2 = 1901: 167) and Aristoxenus is thus just one source among many for this list of Pythagorean friendships provided by Nicomachus. Thus, it is more prudent to accept Iamblichus' clear marking of the end of the quotation of Aristoxenus in 236 as the end of the fragment and not include the material in 237–9.

Again DK adds section 196 and the end of section 198 to the material accepted by Wehrli as fragment 30 (Iambl. *VP* 197–8). Certainly this additional material could derive from Aristoxenus. Its content is broadly consistent with other evidence deriving from Aristoxenus. However, at the beginning of 197 Iamblichus seems to be marking the introduction of a new source with the words “these things *also* are said about the Pythagoreans.” Since 197 is from Aristoxenus this suggests that the preceding material in 196 is not. Again towards the end of 198, after the story of Cleinias reported by Aristoxenus' father Spintharus, Iamblichus seems to mark a new source when he says “it was a fine

custom of theirs *also*.” It thus seems prudent to regard only section 197 and the first part of 198 as deriving from Aristoxenus.

The first fragment from Aristoxenus listed by DK (58D1= Timpanaro Cardini 1b) is Iamblichus *VP* 163–6 with cross-references to *VP* 110 and 64 and Stobaeus 3.1.71 (see [Appendix 2](#) for a detailed discussion of this passage). None of this material is found in Wehrli. It focuses on a number of topics including divination and the training of the memory but the central focus is on music and medicine. We are told that the Pythagoreans particularly focused on the use of diet in medicine and thought that music contributed to health. The primary reason for thinking that this material derives from Aristoxenus has been the supposed similarity with fragment 26, where Aristoxenus reports that the Pythagoreans used music for the purification of the soul and medicine for the purification of the body. However, the similarity to the material in 163–4 is too general to give us confidence that these sections closely reflect anything that Aristoxenus said. They do mention medicine and music in parallel and say that music contributes to health, but there is nothing about the central features of fragment 26 of Aristoxenus: the body/soul distinction and purification. Music is said to contribute to health but is not tied specifically to the soul. We have no reason to believe that Aristoxenus was the only person to discuss Pythagorean beliefs about the influence of music on health. The emphasis on music in Pythagoreanism was well known. This passage is probably relying on a number of sources of which Aristoxenus may be one, but it is impossible to say what is to be ascribed to Aristoxenus. The best indication that Aristoxenus may be one of the sources behind the passage is the first sentence on memory in the middle of section 164. This sentence begins with an expression, “they thought that it was necessary (ᾠοντο δεῖν),” which is characteristic of the style of the *Precepts* (see fr. 2). We might then think that all of the following material on memory down through the beginning of section 166 derived from the *Precepts*. However, as Rohde pointed out (1871–2 = 1901: 157), the first two sentences of the section read like two different attempts to begin an account of Pythagorean views on memory, which in turn suggests that several sources are being combined here. Thus, it seems that we can only be confident that the first sentence on memory in section 164 belongs to Aristoxenus or perhaps just the first clause of this sentence (“They thought it necessary to hold fast and preserve in the memory everything

taught and said" [see [Appendix 2](#)]). Assigning this sentence on memory to Aristoxenus provides no evidence that the earlier material in 163–4 derived from Aristoxenus, since the memory section is not closely tied to what precedes.

The discussion of music in Iamblichus VP 110–12, on the other hand, may be partially based on Aristoxenus, but there are problems with supposing that the passage as a whole derives from his work. Section 110 does show a connection to fragment 26 since it refers to the use of music as a "purification" just as is done in fragment 26. On the other hand the passage goes on to say that music was called "medical treatment (ἰατρείαν) through music" which is in conflict with fragment 26 where music is not presented as a type of medical treatment (ἰατρεία) but is instead contrasted with it as providing purification for the soul rather than the body. Here again it seems likely that a later source such as Nicomachus or Iamblichus himself is composing an account of the Pythagorean use of music which draws on a number of sources including Aristoxenus but which cannot be regarded as a passage from any of Aristoxenus' books.

Thus, it appears that, with the exception of one sentence in Iamblichus VP 164, DK (followed by Timpanaro Cardini) is not justified in adding the additional material found in 58D1, 6 and 7 to fragments 26, 27, 30 and 31 of Wehrli as evidence for Aristoxenus. Moreover, the single sentence in VP 164 most likely derives not from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* but rather from the *Precepts*. However, one other passage in Iamblichus, VP 96–100, not mentioned either by Wehrli or Diels (Kranz would add it as DK 48C5a, see DK 1, 504, 17–19, but he makes no mention of Aristoxenus), but championed by Mewaldt (1904: 28–9) and included by Timpanaro Cardini (1b) has a good claim to be largely if not entirely derived from Aristoxenus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. These sections give a detailed account of how the Pythagoreans structured their daily activities from morning to night. Apart from two sentences at the beginning and a sentence at the end which Iamblichus adds to adjust these sections to his overall narrative, the rest of the passage reads not like a collection of evidence drawn from hither and yon but rather as a unified coherent account of the pattern of the Pythagorean day. There is not any repetition as would be expected if the passage were a mosaic of different sources. Moreover, there is a cross-reference within the passage that helps to hold it together:

when discussing the afternoon walks that the Pythagoreans made (VP 97) there is a reference back to the morning walks with which the passage begins (VP 96). Such judgments are inevitably somewhat subjective, but this unity suggests that one author is behind the whole passage. The passage of course fits the nature of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, as revealed by fragment 31, very well, since it does not mention Pythagoras but rather focuses on the Pythagoreans and sets out their habitual behavior.

In addition to this general compatibility with Aristoxenus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, there are four specific features of the passage that point to Aristoxenian authorship. First, the assertion in section 97 that they ate bread and honey for lunch matches the report explicitly ascribed to Aristoxenus in fragment 27 (see further the commentary on VP 96–100 in [Appendix 1](#)). Second, the attitude toward sacrifice and eating of animals (i.e. that the Pythagoreans ate the meat only of sacrificial animals) in the passage matches Aristoxenus' testimony on these issues elsewhere (Aulus Gellius 4.11.6 – see further [Appendix 1](#) on VP 96–100). Third, in sections 99–100 we are told that the Pythagoreans had a reverent attitude to the gods, the *daimones*, the heroes, their parents and their benefactors. Aristoxenus reports something very similar in the *Precepts* (fr. 8 = Iambl. VP 174). Fourth, we find the expression “they thought that it was necessary” (ᾤοντο δεῖν), which is characteristic of Aristoxenus' *Precepts* and may then have also been used by Aristoxenus in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. Any one of these pieces of evidence taken alone would not be conclusive. In particular, the attitude toward the gods mentioned in the third point was found in a number of ancient authors and hence does not in itself point to Aristoxenus, but when it is found in the context of the other three pieces of evidence, which do point specifically to Aristoxenus, it must be given more weight.

Point four above suggests that 96–100 derives from Aristoxenus, but since it shows features of the style of the *Precepts* we might suppose that 96–100 derived from that work rather than *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (see [Appendix 1](#)). This was in fact the position taken by Timpanaro Cardini (1964: 285–6). The strongest evidence that the passage does not derive from the *Precepts* is that, as noted above, no other sure fragment of the *Precepts* describes the habitual behavior of the Pythagoreans, whereas that is precisely the character of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. So it makes more sense to regard the passage as deriving from the

latter work. Moreover, the argument that Timpanaro Cardini tries to use to show that 96–100 comes from the *Precepts* in fact points to evidence which provides another strong argument that it does not. Immediately following the description of the Pythagorean day in sections 96–100, at the beginning of section 101, Iamblichus says “another mode of education has also been handed down through the Pythagorean precepts.” Iamblichus here uses Aristoxenus’ unusual word for precept (ἀπόφασις) and what follows has been recognized by most scholars as a passage from the *Precepts* (fr. 11 below) introduced by Iamblichus’ important description of the basic nature of the *Precepts*, although he does not mention Aristoxenus by name. Timpanaro Cardini tries to make the clear reference to the *Precepts* in 101–2 also apply back to 96–100, thus indicating that those sections too are from the *Precepts*. But this goes entirely contrary to the structure of 96–102 in Iamblichus. He clearly indicates in 101 that he is going on to new evidence from a new source with his reference to “another mode of education through the Pythagorean precepts.” At least since Chapter 90 Iamblichus has been discussing “the many ways of teaching” in the Pythagorean tradition. In this context referring to “another mode” shows that he is moving on to a new topic and a new source. Timpanaro Cardini is unable to suggest a tenable meaning for “another mode of education” that avoids this implication. The clinching piece of evidence that 101–2 are not continuous with 96–100 is provided precisely by the introduction of the word “precept” (ἀπόφασις) in 101 when “another mode” is introduced. The word then is repeated at the end of the passage in 102 thus clearly marking the passage as a coherent unit, separate from what precedes and follows. The word is not used in sections 96–100 and indeed appears only in sections 101–2 of Iamblichus.

Timpanaro Cardini tries to preserve the unity of 96–102 by noting that 102 ends with a reference to the precepts applying to “the whole of life.” Evidently she took this to refer to the pattern of the day described in 96–100 but the expression “whole of life” is perfectly intelligible without any reference to the pattern of the day described in 96–100 and indeed would be a very unclear way to refer to it. The pattern of the day described in 96–100 is introduced at the end of section 95 with the expression “their pursuits throughout the day” (τῶν ἐπιτηδεύματων . . . δι’ ὅλης ἡμέρας), which finds no parallel in sections 101–2. The structure of sections 96–102 of Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*

thus clearly indicates that 101–2 are regarded by Iamblichus as providing distinct evidence for Pythagorean education from what is found in 96–100. Thus, since 101–2 is from the *Precepts*, the preceding sections 96–100 must be from another source. In this case the distinct source is a different work of Aristoxenus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. It is far from clear whether Iamblichus is using his sources directly so that it is quite possible that he is reporting material he found in an intermediate source and may not be aware that Aristoxenus is the source for both the passages, albeit in different books. Thus, the description of the Pythagorean day described in Iamblichus VP 96–100 can with some confidence be ascribed to Aristoxenus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* and it and frs. 26, 27, 30 and 31 in Wehrli, constitute the reliable evidence for that work.

On the basis of these fragments, what can be said about the nature of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* and its relation to the *Pythagorean Precepts*? The four fragments that can be added to fragment 31, where *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* is explicitly mentioned, exhibit the same characteristics as emerged from considering fragment 31 alone. Two points are central. First, all five fragments focus on the habitual behavior of the Pythagoreans, e.g., what they ate, how they structured their day, how they dealt with emotions such as anger. Second, in two of the fragments, fragment 31 and fragment 30, the actions of specific Pythagoreans are used to illustrate these general statements about their behavior; Cleinias and Archytas illustrate their typical way of dealing with anger while Damon and Phintias exemplify their behavior as friends and their composure under trying circumstances, which led them to avoid lamentations, tears and supplications. The *Pythagorean Precepts*, on the other hand, do not describe behavior or mention any individual Pythagoreans but rather analyze central moral conceptions and present a set of precepts to govern conduct. This distinction between the two works was first emphasized by Mewaldt (1904) and is fundamental. It fits the surviving fragments of both treatises and accords with Iamblichus' account of what a precept is (VP 101, see above [Chapter 2](#)). Diels and Kranz mention this distinction but oddly do not choose to apply it in organizing the material that they present from Aristoxenus (1.467). Indeed, as we have seen above and as Burkert (1998: 314) noted, Diels and Kranz's collection of texts of Aristoxenus in 58D is very confused. Timpanaro Cardini follows DK closely, making only one addition (1a)

and presenting the fragments in the same order. She also does not make any attempt to identify to which book each of the fragments belongs, arguing that we do not have sufficient evidence to make such attributions (1964: 273–4; cf. Wehrli 1967: 49). But while there is some justification for this practice regarding the *Life of Pythagoras* and *On Pythagoras and His Associates* it is hypercritical to take this approach with regard to the *Precepts*, where the evidence is more extensive. We have seven fragments preserved by Stobaeus, which are explicitly said to derive from the *Precepts*, and those fragments present a consistent pattern of what was included in the *Precepts*, which is unlikely to be accidental. Moreover, this pattern exactly matches what Iamblichus describes as the Pythagorean way of teaching through precepts (VP 101).

There is one last complication, which also helps to clarify the relation between the *Precepts* and *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. I have already suggested that *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* could on occasion use precepts to explain why the Pythagoreans acted in certain ways, which might raise doubts as to how radical a distinction there was between these two works. The single clear example that we have of this practice is, in fact, VP 96 (cf. VP 100), where the form of the precept cited matches the form used in the *Precepts* (φροντο δεῖν “they thought that it was necessary”). However, as noted above, the rest of the format of 96–100 with its description of habitual actions finds no parallel in the secure fragments of the *Precepts*. Moreover, we do not have any evidence that the specific precept cited (that we should not meet anyone else in the morning before we have set our own soul in order), appeared in the *Precepts*. If it did, then *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* would begin to look like an attempt to illustrate the *Precepts* with examples. It does not seem likely, however, that *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* served simply to illustrate the *Precepts*, since it would be hard to understand why Aristoxenus wrote two different works in that case. Why not write just one treatise where precepts are illustrated by specific actions? A possible response would be that Aristoxenus did just write one treatise, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, and that a later anthologist made a selection of precepts out of that work and gave it the title, the *Pythagorean Precepts of Aristoxenus*, meaning that it consisted of precepts derived from Aristoxenus' work. The serious problem with this suggestion is the use of the word ἀπόφασις for precept. As noted in Chapter 2 above, this word used in the sense of “precept” appears nowhere else in Stobaeus or

Diogenes Laertius as the title of a book and it is not used in the doxographical tradition as the word for “precept” (see [Chapter 7](#) below). It is thus extremely unlikely that an anthologist would choose it to entitle a collection of precepts that he found in the writings of Aristoxenus. On the other hand, Iamblichus VP 101 singles out this use of ἀπόφασις as peculiarly Pythagorean, which makes it much more likely that it reflects the usage of Aristoxenus relying on his Pythagorean sources than that it reflects the usage of an anthologist. Moreover, the two longer fragments that are most securely derived from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (frs. 30 and 31) do not cite any precepts, which makes it unlikely that the work was filled with precepts for the anthologist to excerpt.

The most likely explanation of the evidence, then, is that in writing *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, Aristoxenus started from stories about the actions of Pythagoreans of the fifth and fourth centuries and derived general accounts of Pythagorean behavior from them. In some cases, however, he may also have formulated precepts in order to explain their actions, naturally adopting the style of the *Pythagorean Precepts*. The latter treatise, on the other hand, appears to be a systematic treatise providing analysis of central moral terms, such as desire and chance, and setting forth a series of precepts to govern human life. Moreover, while *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* drew on the actions of Pythagoreans from differing times and places (e.g., Archytas in Tarentum, Damon and Phintias in Syracuse), the *Pythagorean Precepts*' attempt to present a unified and systematic account suggests that it reflected not the views of different groups of Pythagoreans but rather the views of a specific group of Pythagoreans at a specific time. The most likely candidates, as suggested above, would be Aristoxenus' Pythagorean teacher Xenophilus and his associates, but, of course, certainty is not possible. Thus the *Pythagorean Precepts* can be seen as a sort of catechism for a specific group of Pythagoreans, whereas *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* is a collection of stories relating to Pythagoreans of different places and times.

7 | The Influence of the *Pythagorean Precepts* on the Later Pythagorean Tradition

Aristoxenus' five books on the Pythagoreans clearly were an important source for the later Pythagorean tradition. However, if instead of treating Aristozenus' Pythagorean works as a group we are careful to focus just on the *Pythagorean Precepts* the situation is more complicated and interesting. Clearly the *Precepts* had a significant influence on Stobaeus and Iamblichus. The seven excerpts from the *Precepts* are an important part of the Pythagorean texts in Stobaeus' overall collection of texts for the edification of his son. The *Precepts* bulk even larger in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* where they constitute roughly 23 out of the 267 sections of the text (10 pages out of 115 pages in Dillon and Hershbell's text). This means that they account for 8–9% of the text, which is notable for a single work.¹ With the examples of Stobaeus and Iamblichus in mind we might well expect that much of the rest of the Pythagorean tradition, at least where the focus is on ethical precepts, would also rely heavily on the *Precepts*. This does not, however, appear to be the case. There are a number of texts that present sets of precepts for the Pythagorean way of life, the most important of which are: 1) portions of Diogenes Laertius' *Life of Pythagoras* (8.22–4), 2) portions of Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras* (38–41), 3) Diodorus Siculus' account of Pythagoreanism (10.3–11), 4) Iamblichus' report of the four speeches that Pythagoras supposedly gave on his arrival in Croton (VP 37–57) and 5) some of the pseudo-Pythagorean texts collected by Thesleff. Although some scholars have claimed that these texts rely heavily on the *Precepts*,

¹ Iamblichus draws on other works of Aristozenus than just the *Precepts*. Most scholars would argue that Aristozenus is one of the three major sources for Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, but, in fact, he only refers to Aristozenus four times in that work. Three references (233, 234, 237) occur in regard to the story of the Pythagorean friends Damon and Phintias, which Iamblichus explicitly says came from Aristozenus' work entitled *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. The fourth reference (251) is to Aristozenus' account of the attacks on the Pythagorean societies in southern Italy, although Iamblichus does not indicate what work of Aristozenus he is drawing on in this case.

they, in fact, show only very limited similarity to the extant fragments of the *Precepts*.

Before beginning a detailed examination of each of these texts and their relationship to the *Precepts*, an important point of methodology must be raised. Only fragments of the *Precepts* survive, so that simply noting that a given list of precepts does not overlap with the *Precepts* on every point need not mean that the list is not drawing on the *Precepts*, since it may be drawing on sections of it that have not survived. This means that it is not necessary that every point in a given text needs to correspond to something in the *Precepts* in order for that text to be drawing on them. However, to make a convincing case that a given text is drawing on the *Precepts*, it is necessary to show that at least some of the material in the text parallels what is said in the *Precepts* in a clear and specific way. The similarity needs to be more than just a general agreement in outlook. If such material is present then we may well regard other parts of the surrounding text, which do not specifically parallel the surviving fragments of the *Precepts*, as nonetheless likely to rely on them.

Mewaldt argued that Diogenes Laertius 8.22–4 and Porphyry, *VP* 38–41 show great similarity to one another and derive this similarity from their both being basically summaries of Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* (1904: 39–40). He is right that these two texts do share striking similarities to each other, which suggest that they are drawing on similar sources, but far from showing a close connection to the *Precepts*, they seem to have been composed with little if any use of the *Precepts*. The parallels between Diogenes and Porphyry are a good example of the sort of specific parallel required to suggest a common source. Thus, Diogenes 8.23 advises one “never to kill nor injure any cultivated plant nor even any animal that does not injure mankind,” and in Porphyry *VP* 39 we find “one should neither destroy nor damage any cultivated plant that bears good fruit nor any animal that is not harmful to mankind.” There is some variation in language between the two passages but some quite specific phrases are virtually identical (φυτὸν ἡμερον . . . ἄλλὰ μηδὲ ζῶον ὃ μὴ βλάπτει [βλαβερόν]). Again, in Diogenes Laertius 22 Pythagoras' disciples are advised to always say on entering their home “Where did I trespass? What did I achieve? What have I not done that I should have done?” In Porphyry *VP* 40 the situation is changed slightly in that the disciples are supposed to say the words before sleep rather than on arriving home but the words said are identical. These two

passages show beyond doubt that Diogenes Laertius and Porphyry are using a common source for some of the material they report.

If Diogenes Laertius 8.22–4 and Porphyry *VP* 38–41 were basically summaries of the *Precepts* as Mewaldt suggests, we would certainly expect that the two passages quoted in the last paragraph derived from the *Precepts*. However, neither of these passages is found in the surviving fragments of the *Precepts*. We might still save these passages for the *Precepts* if at least some specific parallels of this sort were found between the *Precepts* and Diogenes Laertius 8.22–4 and Porphyry *VP* 38–41. If these specific parallels existed then we could suppose that the passages common to Diogenes and Porphyry discussed in the last paragraph were from the *Precepts* but were found in passages that have not survived. However, no such specific parallels can be found between the surviving fragments of the *Precepts* and either Diogenes Laertius 8.22–4 or Porphyry *VP* 38–41.

Before looking at the specific precepts in Diogenes 8.22–4, it is important to note that the language used to introduce them is not at all similar to what we find in the *Precepts*. Thus, the term for precept in Aristoxenus (ἀπρόφασις) does not appear in Diogenes. Diogenes instead uses a word “recommended” (παρεγγυᾶν) that appears nowhere in the *Precepts*. The passage in Diogenes can be roughly divided into the following eighteen precepts:

1. Upon entering the house say: “Where did I trespass? What did I achieve? What have I not done that I should have done?”
2. Prevent victims from being offered to the gods.
3. Worship only at an altar unstained with blood.
4. Do not swear by the gods since a man should strive to make himself worthy of trust.
5. Honor elders, since what precedes in time is more valuable, as in the world sunrise is more valuable than sunset, in life the beginning is more valuable than the end, and in living generation is more valuable than destruction.
6. Honor the gods before the *daimones*, heroes before men, and of men most of all one’s parents.
7. Associate with others so as not to make friends enemies but to make enemies friends.
8. Deem nothing your own.

9. Aid the law but fight with lawlessness.
10. Never kill nor injure any cultivated plant nor an animal that does not harm mankind.
11. Neither be overcome by laughter nor be sullen.
12. Avoid an excess of meat.
13. On a journey let exertions and rest alternate.
14. Train the memory.
15. Neither do nor say anything in anger.
16. Honor all divination.
17. Sing to the lyre and by hymns show due gratitude to the gods and good men.
18. Abstain from beans because they produce gas and partake most of the breath of life, besides it is better for the stomach, if they are not taken and this will make dreams and sleep untroubled.

Of these eighteen only three (6, 9 and 14) show any sort of parallel with the extant fragments of the *Precepts*. Even in these cases the parallels are of a very general sort and do not have the sort of specificity required to suggest that Diogenes is relying on the *Precepts* in this passage.

Mewaldt (1904: 40) seized on precepts 6 (“Honor the gods before the *daimones*, heroes before men, and of men most of all one’s parents”) and 9 (“Aid the law but fight with lawlessness”) and pointed to a parallel with fragment 8 of the *Precepts* (= Iambl. VP 174–6 – “After the divine and the *daimones* pay most attention to parents and the law”). The idea that one should honor the gods first and then one’s parents and the laws is one of the most widespread in ancient Greek culture (see the commentary on fr. 8) and indeed in most cultures. The appearance of these ideas in DL thus hardly requires that Aristoxenus was the specific source. Moreover, the details of the presentation of these precepts do not match what is found in the *Precepts*. Thus, Diogenes mentions the heroes who do not appear in the *Precepts*. More importantly the argument for honoring elders (and hence the gods and parents) in Diogenes (i.e. that which comes first in time deserves more respect) as well as the examples that support it (e.g., sunrise and sunset) are not found in this context in the *Precepts*. Conversely the argument given in the *Precepts* for honoring the gods, parents and laws (i.e. human beings are by nature hubristic and need as many checks on their hubris as possible) does not appear in Diogenes. It is true that the *Precepts*, in a different context,

present an argument that is similar to what is found in Diogenes. In a discussion of the first principles of science and of rulers in political associations the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* argue that a first principle/ ruler is more honorable (fr. 10 = Iambl. VP 182–3). However, while this passage may show that the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* might have found the argument given in Diogenes congenial, this does not show that they used the argument reported in Diogenes with regard to elders and parents.

There are a number of other precepts in Diogenes 8.22–4 that we could well imagine that the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* might accept (e.g., 15. Never to say or do anything in anger). However, this is not surprising. We would expect some similarity in the views of different groups that call themselves Pythagoreans. In the case of other precepts we simply do not know what the authors of the *Precepts* would have thought. Did they worship only at bloodless altars (3) or avoid beans (18)? Nothing in the surviving fragments of the *Precepts* allows us to answer such questions. It is true that points 9 and 10 do find a close parallel in language with Iamblichus VP 99–100 (e.g., νόμῳ τε βοηθεῖν καὶ ἀνομίᾳ πολεμεῖν), which I have argued above is likely to come from Aristoxenus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, so that work is one of the ultimate sources for the list of precepts in Diogenes Laertius 8.22–4. In the case of the *Precepts*, however, the only similarities with the list of precepts in Diogenes are of such a general character and shared with so many other Greek ethical texts (e.g., honor the gods and your parents), that there are no grounds for supposing that the *Precepts* were a source for Diogenes 8.22–4.

The situation is similar in the case of Porphyry VP 38–41. Again Porphyry does not use Aristoxenus' word for precept (ἀπόφασις) anywhere in his discussion, using instead a word (παρήνει) not found in the *Precepts*. Eleven precepts can be derived from this passage of Porphyry:

1. Speak well of the race of the gods and *daimones* and heroes.
2. Be well disposed to parents and benefactors.
3. Obey the laws.
4. Do not worship the gods by the way but of set purpose.
5. Sacrifice things in odd numbers to the heavenly gods and in even numbers to those of the underworld. For the better is the monad and light and right and equal and enduring and straight and the worse the dyad and darkness and left and unequal and transient and curved.

6. One should neither destroy nor damage any cultivated plant that bears good fruit nor any animal that is not harmful to man.
7. One should faithfully keep a deposit not only of money but words.
8. One should recognize three classes of important matters that should be undertaken, first the honorable and noble, second the beneficial for life and third the pleasant.
9. There are two sorts of pleasure. That which through luxury pleases the stomach and sexual desire he compared to the songs of the Sirens but that found in things noble and righteous and necessary for life, which is both immediately pleasant and remains unchanged in the future, he said was like the harmony of the muses.
10. Two times of day should receive special attention, going to sleep and arising. In the first people should review what they have done and in the second what is about to happen. Every one should receive correction from themselves for what they have done and take thought for the future. Before sleep everyone should sing the following verses and not go to sleep before thrice reviewing the day's actions: In what way have I transgressed? What have I accomplished? What have I not done that I should have? On arising one should scrutinize what actions he will perform in the day.
11. Tell the truth, for only this can make man like god. For he learned from the Magi that even of God the body is like light and the soul like truth.

The majority of these precepts (4–7 and 9–11) find no parallel at all in the *Precepts* (although point 6 has a parallel with Aristoxenus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* [Iambl. *VP* 99]). The first three (honoring the gods, parents and laws) do correspond to the *Precepts* in general terms but these are once again very common concepts in Greek society in general so that, just as in the case of Diogenes 8.22–4 where they also appeared, there is no compelling argument that they derive specifically from the *Precepts*. None of the specific language used to make these points in Porphyry (εὐφημον, ἀγαθὴν ἔχειν διάνοιαν, εὖνουν) finds a parallel in the *Precepts*. The closest parallel to the *Precepts* is found in point 8, where the three classes of important matters that should be undertaken are identified as 1) the honorable and noble (εὐκλεῶν καὶ καλῶν) 2) the beneficial for life (συμπερόντων) and 3) the pleasant.

In fragment 9 of the *Precepts* (Iambl. VP 204) the Pythagoreans say that in our actions we should aim most of all at the noble and seemly (καλόν τε καὶ εὖσχημον) and secondarily at the advantageous and beneficial (συμφέρον τε καὶ ὠφέλιμον). The first two of the three items listed in Porphyry are the same, listed in the same order and there is some overlap in specific vocabulary. All of this certainly suggests that this precept in Porphyry may have had the *Precepts* as one source. However, in another respect this passage in Porphyry is in direct conflict with the *Precepts*. It recognizes pleasure as the third legitimate object of pursuit and makes a distinction between two types of pleasure. The *Precepts*, on the other hand, make no such distinction in types of pleasure and emphatically assert that we should never do anything with pleasure as the aim (fr. 9). It thus appears that what is found in Porphyry is a later reworking of what is said in the *Precepts* which adopts a more conciliatory attitude towards pleasure.

In sum, only one item in Porphyry suggests a direct connection to the *Precepts* and that item has itself been significantly revised. Taking the evidence of Diogenes Laertius and Porphyry together it is clear that neither one was drawing directly on the *Precepts*. Both are probably relying on later doxographical sources and the similarities between their accounts noted above show that their sources clearly overlap. However, there is little evidence that those doxographical sources relied on the *Precepts* to any significant extent either. The overlap with item 8 in Porphyry is the only convincing evidence that the *Precepts* played any role in the formation of Diogenes' and Porphyry's sources and in that case the approach of the *Precepts* has already been modified.

Diodorus' account of Pythagoreanism in Book 10, [Chapters 3–11](#), of his *Library of History* presents a mixture of a biographical account of Pythagoras and precepts that guided the life of his followers. It has often been thought that Diodorus depended heavily on Aristoxenus' writings on the Pythagoreans: "most of Diodorus' material . . . is ultimately derived from Aristoxenus" (von Fritz [1940](#): 26), "It is based chiefly on Aristoxenus" (Zhmod [2012a](#): 72, cf. Mewaldt [1904](#): 47–52). Some features of Diodorus' account surely do derive from Aristoxenus: 1) Pythagoras as a Tyrrhenian (10.3, cf. Aristoxenus fr. 11a = Diog. Laert. 8.1); 2) Pythagoras' nursing and burial of Pherocydes (3.4 = fr. 14 = Diog. Laert. 1.118); 3) the story of Damon and Phintias (10.4, cf. fr. 31 = Iambl.

VP 233); 4) Archytas' refusal to punish in anger (10.7, cf. fr. 30 = Iambl. VP 197); 5) The attack on the Pythagoreans by Cylon (11.1, cf. fr. 18 = Iambl. VP 248ff.). It may also be that the story of Cleinias and Prorus goes back to Aristoxenus but this is less certain (4.1–2, cf. Iambl. VP 239 – not specifically ascribed to Aristoxenus). There are, however, two important things to note about this evidence. First, as all scholars have recognized, Diodorus is not using Aristoxenus directly. All of the material has been heavily reworked (von Fritz 1940: 23–6; Schorn 2013) so that in some cases the emphasis of the story has been significantly changed (e.g., Damon and Phintias). Von Fritz concludes that the material from Aristoxenus “has undergone a number of alterations” and that “in some cases it is very likely that there were several successive alterations” (1940: 26). Second, there has been a tendency to overstate the influence of Aristoxenus. There are about ten pages of Greek text in the Loeb edition of Diodorus and the material deriving from Aristoxenus amounts to a little over two pages, so we can only be confident that 20–25% of Diodorus' account ultimately derives from Aristoxenus. It is of course possible that other material for which we have no explicit parallel also derives from Aristoxenus, but there is some material that cannot come from Aristoxenus (e.g., the reference to Callimachus [10.6.4], who lived much later) and other material that conflicts with what is attested about Aristoxenus' presentation of Pythagoreanism (the statement in 10.6.1 that Pythagoras did not eat meat). So it would be a mistake to assume that everything is from Aristoxenus because some passages are. The secure evidence thus shows Aristoxenus to be an important source but to say that “most” of the material comes from Aristoxenus or that it “chiefly” comes from Aristoxenus overstates the case. It is better to follow Burkert in saying that Aristoxenus was “among” Diodorus' sources (1972: 104). Schorn similarly does not identify Aristoxenus as Diodorus' main source noting just “there is some agreement with fragments of Aristoxenus” (2014: 313; for more detail see Schorn 2013).

It is important to note that the material in Diodorus cited above as deriving from Aristoxenus comes from other works of Aristoxenus and none of it comes from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Diodorus does, however, present a considerable amount of material that takes the form of precepts along with the biographical information about Pythagoras and anecdotes about Pythagoreans. Does any of this material derive from the

Precepts? The following are the main precepts and practices that can be identified in Diodorus:

- 1) (10.5.1) They trained the memory in the following way. They did not arise until they had told one another what they had done the day before. If they had time they would report what they did on the third and fourth day past and even earlier.
- 2) (10.5.2) They trained themselves in self-control by having banquets served to them and then sending them away without eating them.
- 3) (10.7.1) Pythagoras urged his followers to cultivate the simple life (λιτότης). For, extravagance (πολυτέλεια) ruins fortunes and bodies. Most diseases come from indigestion (ώμότης) and this from extravagance.
- 4) (10.7.2) He persuaded many to eat uncooked food and drink only water.
- 5) (10.8.1) The Pythagoreans emphasized constancy (βεβαιότης) to friends believing that the loyalty of friends was the greatest good in life.
- 6) (10.8.3) The Pythagoreans put nothing about loyalty to friends in writing and carried their precepts only in memory so that no outsider ever found out what they were.
- 7) (10.9.1) Pythagoras commanded his pupils to rarely take an oath but, if they did, to abide by it in all things.
- 8) (10.9.3) Pythagoras said that it is better to approach a woman in the summer not at all and in winter only sparingly.
- 9) (10.9.3) They thought that every kind of pleasure in love is harmful and indulgence in them is weakening and destructive.
- 10) (10.9.4) Pythagoras said that you should engage in the pleasures of love only when you wish not to be master of yourself.
- 11) (10.9.5) The Pythagoreans divided the life of man into four ages – the child, the young man, the man and the old man. The child is parallel to spring, the young man to summer, the man to fall and the old man to winter.
- 12) (10.9.6) Pythagoras taught that when worshipping the gods garments should be not costly but white and clean. The body should be clean but also the soul undefiled.
- 13) (10.9.7) Pythagoras said that the prudent man should pray to the gods for good things on behalf of imprudent men, for the foolish are ignorant of what is good.

- 14) (10.9.8) Pythagoras said one should pray simply for all good things and not name things singly like power, strength, beauty and wealth, since these latter can ruin those who receive them. An example is given from the *Phoenician Maidens* of Euripides.

There is very little to suggest that most of this material is derived from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. The general format in Diodorus argues against any close connection, since most of what Diodorus says is presented as the teaching of Pythagoras himself, contrary to Aristoxenus' universal practice of presenting his precepts as what the Pythagoreans as a group thought. Moreover, Aristoxenus' word for precept (ἀπόφασις) is again not found in Diodorus. It is quite possible that the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* would agree with a number of the fourteen points listed. However, there are almost no parallels at the specific level. Thus, surely the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* believe that self-control is a good thing and urge simplicity of life in agreement with points 2 and 3. However, it is not enough to say that the exercise with the banquets fits with the attitude towards desire in the *Precepts* (Schorn 2013); the exercise would fit with most philosophers' attitudes towards desire and self-control. The crucial point is that there is no agreement in the details. There is nothing in the *Precepts* about having banquets served and then refusing to eat them nor about extravagance producing indigestion and indigestion disease. Again, the *Precepts* value friendship and are wary about pleasure but do not use the key terms (e.g., βεβαιότης) or examples (e.g., avoiding sex in the summer) found in Diodorus. There is only a specific parallel with the *Precepts* in one case, point 11. The material in point 11 is also reported by Diogenes Laertius (8.9), who explicitly assigns it to a pseudo-Pythagorean work known as the *Tripartitum*, which dates sometime before 200 BC (Centrone 2014: 317). Close study of the similarity between these passages shows that it is far from clear that the *Precepts* served as a source for the *Tripartitum* and hence this passage in Diodorus. Moreover, if it was a source it is unlikely to have been used directly (see the detailed discussion of the *Tripartitum* below). Point 9 has no specific parallel with the material in the *Precepts* but does agree in adopting a negative attitude to all sexuality. More importantly, it shows some of the typical stylistic features of the *Precepts* (see the "Pythagorean views on Sex and Procreation Outside of the *Precepts*" in the commentary on section 6 of fr. 9). In particular, although modern editors have

emended the text so that the verbs are singular with Pythagoras understood as the subject, the manuscript has the plural for one of the verbs and the plural, which is typical of the *Precepts*, is thus the preferable reading as the *lectio difficilior* (see [Appendix 3](#)). Accordingly there is a real possibility that this one sentence in Diodorus is based fairly closely on the *Precepts* and I have included it in [Appendix 3](#) as subsidiary fragment 4. But this seems to be the exception rather than the rule. As we have seen, at most two of the fourteen precepts listed in Diodorus have some probability of deriving from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Once again as was the case with Diogenes Laertius and Porphyry there is little evidence to suggest that the *Precepts* played a major role in the formulation of lists of precepts in the later doxographical tradition for Pythagoreanism.

Another important set of Pythagorean precepts are to be found in the four speeches that Iamblichus presents Pythagoras as delivering shortly after his arrival in Croton (VP 37–54). These speeches are delivered to the young men of Croton, the thousand men who served on the council of the city, the boys and finally the women. It is usually thought that none of the speeches go back to the time of Pythagoras but are rather later compositions. In the form we have them they are likely to be derived from one of Iamblichus' main sources, Apollonius (of Tyana?), who uses Timaeus of Tauromenium as an important source (Rohde 1871–2 = 1901: 132–5; Schorn 2014: 307; Zhmud 2012a: 69–70). However, some scholars have suggested that Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* were also a source (Zhmud 2012a: 70 n.36; Zucconi 1970) or even a major source (Mewaldt 1904: 47). Careful examination of the speeches in comparison with the *Precepts* shows that the similarities are at the most general of levels and that there is no convincing evidence that the *Precepts* were used as a source for any of the speeches.

In the speech to the young men of Croton three main points are made: the young men should 1) esteem their elders 2) practice temperance and 3) pursue *paideia*. The Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* surely agreed with all of these points but so would most ancient Greeks. Any argument for specific dependence on the *Precepts* would need to be based on the details of the development of these points but there is little similarity to the way in which these points are developed in the speech and in the *Precepts*. The speech supports the call for the young to honor their elders by an appeal to the general principle that what precedes in time is more

honorable than what follows. A series of examples are then given to illustrate the principle: the sun's rising is more honorable than its setting, the dawn more honorable than the evening, the beginning more honorable than the end, birth more than death, natives more than foreigners, gods more than *daimones*, *daimones* more than demigods, heroes more than humans. As we have seen above, Diogenes Laertius mentions the same general principle and also includes most of the same examples (8.22–3). So it is clear that Diogenes and this speech in Iamblichus are drawing on the same source. There is no reason to believe, however, that the source in question was the *Precepts*. As noted above in the discussion of Diogenes the *Precepts* mention neither the general principle nor any of the numerous examples. The speech goes on to give further arguments for honoring one's parents and then adds evidence from mythology noting that Homer glorified Zeus by calling him "father of the gods and mortals" and that Heracles carried out his labors out of obedience to someone older than himself. None of these further arguments or examples from mythology are found in the *Precepts*.

Mewaldt thought that sections 174–6 in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* were the basis on which the speech was founded (1904: 47). But although that passage agrees with the speech that we should honor the gods and the *daimones* first and after them our parents (a view that surely most Greeks would accept), it lacks the arguments and examples listed above which are used in the speech and puts forth its own arguments that are not found in the speech. The key terms in the speech are "what proceeds" and "what follows" (τὸ προηγούμενον, τὸ ἐπόμενον) neither of which appears in the *Precepts*, while in the *Precepts* the argument is that because we have a great complexity (ποικιλία) of desires and are naturally prone to insolence (ὕβριστικόν) we need the superior authority of the gods and our parents to produce self-control and order. Neither this argument nor its key terms appears anywhere in Pythagoras' speech to the young men at Croton. The *Precepts* develop the point further by asserting that there is no greater evil than anarchy. This memorable point also finds no parallel in Pythagoras' speech.

Zucconi (1970: 495–6) tries to show parallels with a different passage of the *Precepts*, Iamblichus VP 182 (fr. 10). He sets out the text of Pythagoras' speech to the young men alongside texts from Diogenes Laertius 8.22–3 and Iamblichus VP 182 (fr. 10) to show the similarity of the texts and suggest that Aristoxenus was the ultimate source for the

other two texts. However, the close parallels are all between Diogenes Laertius and Pythagoras' speech. Iamblichus *VP* 182 does not focus on elders as the other two passages do, nor does it mention the key terms "what follows" and "what precedes" as they both do, nor does it give any of the examples of the key terms, some of which are shared by the two texts (rising/setting and generation/destruction). It does share with the other passages the general idea that a beginning or first principle (ἀρχή) is to be honored, but in the *Precepts* the emphasis is on the notion of first principle as is shown by the emphasis on knowledge and the sciences, which is totally lacking in Diogenes Laertius and Pythagoras' speech to the youth. The *Precepts* only parallel the other texts at the specific level by mentioning generation and the city as areas in which the first principle is to be honored. All of this suggests that what we find in the *Precepts* is a parallel development of a similar idea rather than being the source for what is found in Pythagoras' speech to the young men and in Diogenes Laertius 8.22–3.

The speech goes on to state that in our associations with others we should never become enemies to friends but try to become friends to enemies. This statement finds an exact parallel in Diogenes Laertius (8.23) but although the *Precepts* discuss friends and associations there is no such statement. Once again there is good reason to think that Diogenes and the speech of Pythagoras are using the same source but no reason to think that the source is the *Precepts*. Pythagoras then urges the young to practice the virtue of temperance, arguing among other things that it embraces both goods of the body and goods of the soul. The importance of self-control is then illustrated by the negative example of the Trojan War where the failure of one person to exercise self-control led to misfortunes for many. None of this discussion of temperance finds a parallel in the *Precepts*, although temperance is mentioned in several places (Iambl. *VP* 175). Pythagoras then finishes the speech with a long argument for the value of mental culture (παιδεία). The *Precepts* clearly value training of the mind but they never use the term παιδεία nor make any of these arguments. Thus, the only parallels between Pythagoras' speech to the young men and the *Precepts* are very general notions such as that we should honor the gods and parents and that temperance is a good thing – notions found in a wide range of Greek texts. When we look for parallels in the specific way these ideas are developed nothing is to be found, so that there is no

reason to suspect that whoever composed Pythagoras' speech was in any way relying on the *Precepts*.

The situation is similar with the remaining three speeches of Pythagoras in Iamblichus so that there is no reason to go into such detail. The council members are urged to understand that they hold their country as a common deposit from the citizens, that they should be equal to the citizens and surpass them only in justice, that they should not misuse the gods' names in an oath, that they should provide the management of their own households as a model for their management of the state, that they should be genuinely well-disposed toward their offspring and try to be loved by them not just because of the relationship but because of their character, that they should know only their wives and regard them as suppliants, that they should be examples of discipline and temperance, and that they make sure that the people are motivated not by fear of punishment but by shame at wrongdoing. This is a large number of fairly specific precepts none of which are paralleled in the *Precepts*. In only one case is there a *prima facie* connection with the *Precepts*. In section 49, Pythagoras tells the councilors that there is nothing better than the right time (καίρος). There is a long discussion of the right time in the *Precepts* (Iambl. VP 180–3 = fr. 10) so we might think that here at last is a specific parallel. But once again it is precisely the specific parallel that is lacking. In the speech Pythagoras introduces the notion of the right time in support of his call on the councilors to avoid laziness. If you are not lazy and always ready you will be prepared when the opportunity arises. The *Precepts* say nothing about laziness. On the other hand the *Precepts*' detailed discussion of what is appropriate in terms of the age, relationship and status of the people involved (VP 180 = fr. 10) is not found in Pythagoras' speech. Once again the only similarity is simply in the use of the concept of the "right time," but this concept is found in many Greek texts from Hesiod onward and again there is no indication that the author of Pythagoras' speech was using the specific discussion of καίρος found in the *Precepts*.

In his third speech Pythagoras advises the boys of Croton, among other things, to neither begin a quarrel nor defend oneself against one, to be eager for *paideia*, to practice listening in order to be able to speak, to start now on the path they will follow as adults, not to contradict elders so that when they become elders they will not be contradicted. Some of this may be good advice and agrees in general terms with some of what is

said in the *Precepts* but none of it nor anything else in the speech to the boys finds a specific parallel in the *Precepts*. Pythagoras gives his fourth and final speech to the women of Croton. He gives them a series of precepts on how to carry out sacrifices (e.g., make what they offer with their own hands; don't spend lavishly on sacrifices). He advises them to love their husbands more than their fathers and that they may enter the temple on the same day after sleeping with their husbands but after sleeping with another man never. This is followed by a series of other precepts, some illustrated by myth. Nothing of what is said to the women is paralleled in the *Precepts*. It is thus clear that the *Precepts* are very unlikely to have served as a source for any of the four speeches that Iamblichus presents Pythagoras giving at Croton. There are very few parallels at all and the only parallels are at such a level of generality (e.g., honor the gods and one's parents, pay attention to the right time) that they cannot serve as a basis for suggesting that *Precepts* had any connection with what Iamblichus presents Pythagoras as saying.

There is some evidence for the influence of the *Precepts* in another area of the Pythagorean tradition, the pseudo-Pythagorean writings, although this influence is often overstated (Zhud 2012a: 65, n. 17 "this work . . . exerted a strong influence on the pseudo-Pythagorean ethical treatises"; cf. Centrone 1990: 38–41, whom Zhud cites). The prime example of this influence is the clear borrowing from the *Precepts* in a passage of the pseudo-Pythagorean treatise *On the Nature of the Universe* by Ocellus, which was probably composed in the first century BC or a little earlier. The detailed verbal parallels between sections 52–3 of Ocellus and an excerpt from the *Precepts* in Stobaeus (4.37.4) and in Iamblichus (VP 209) are set out in Chapter 5 of the Introduction. As demonstrated there, Ocellus shows a closer connection to the version in Iamblichus and both are likely to be based on a source which had already paraphrased and expanded Aristoxenus' original text, which is more closely preserved in Stobaeus. That Ocellus should take over a passage from the *Precepts* wholesale in this way is not surprising since elsewhere in *On the Nature of the Universe* passages from Aristoxenus' teacher Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption* are taken over in a similar way (sections 24–9 = *Gen. corr.* 329a32–331a1).

Beyond this passage in Ocellus there is, however, only one other passage in the pseudepigrapha that has a reasonable chance of being dependent on the *Precepts*. A fragment from the pseudo-Pythagorean

treatise *On Law and Justice* ascribed to Archytas in Stobaeus (Thesleff 36.2–4 = Stobaeus 4.5.61) asserts that the true ruler must not only be knowledgeable and able with regard to ruling well but also humane (μὴ μόνον ἐπιστάμονά τε καὶ δυνατόν ἤμεν περὶ τὸ καλῶς ἄρχεν ἀλλὰ καὶ φιλάνθρωπον). Fragment 2 of the *Precepts* similarly reports that the rulers should be not only knowledgeable but also humane (οὐ μόνον ἐπιστήμονας ἀλλὰ καὶ φιλανθρώπους). The passages are not identical but partially identical language used in the same context makes a connection fairly likely.

A series of other passages from the pseudepigrapha have been thought by various scholars to show influence from the *Precepts*, but closer examination shows that none of these supposed instances of influence is convincing. Thus, at first sight a passage from the pseudo-Pythagorean treatise *Prelude to the Laws* ascribed to Zaleucus (Stob. 4.2.19 = Thesleff 226.24–228.21) appears to have close connections to fragment 8 of the *Precepts* (Mewaldt 1904: 45), but detailed study shows that the differences between the passages are more striking than the similarities and that the *Prelude to the Laws* has closer connections to Book 10 of Plato's *Laws* (see the commentary on fr. 8).

Mewaldt (1904: 45) points to the similarity between Diotogenes' point that men pay great attention to how young vines are to be taken care of while neglecting the rearing of young men and fragment 9 of the *Precepts*, where the complaint is that men take great care of young animals but not young human beings (Mewaldt cites Iambl. *VP* 204 but the point is also made at 212–13). The problem with Mewaldt's point is that the comparison between taking care of young animals or plants and taking care of young people was fairly widespread in Greek culture (see e.g., Theognis 183–92) and not limited to the *Precepts* so that Diotogenes need not be relying on the *Precepts*, especially since Diotogenes talks about plants and the *Precepts* about animals. In a note Mewaldt further supports his point by noting that the expression εἰκῇ τε καὶ ὥς ἔτυχε (“without plan and haphazardly”) which is used to describe human rearing of the young in the *Precepts* (Iambl. *VP* 213) also appears in Diotogenes (77.6 Thesleff). Once again, however, it is very unlikely that Diotogenes derived this phrase from the *Precepts* for three reasons. First, Diotogenes does not use the phrase in the passage about vines that Mewaldt cited as a parallel to the *Precepts'* treatment of animals but in a different context. So we would have to suppose that Diotogenes read

the phrase in the context of animal-rearing in the *Precepts* but then did not use it in the supposed parallel passage about the rearing of vines but used it later in a different context. Second, Diotogenes, in fact, uses a slightly different expression by adding ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτομάτου. Third, the expression εἰκὴ τε καὶ ὥς ἔτυχε (minus the τε) is not unique to the *Precepts* but appears in several authors who are likely to have written before or at the same time (first century BC to first century AD) as Diotogenes (e.g., Chrysippus and Diodorus, see the commentary on fragment 9, line 171). Thus, the supposed close connection between Diotogenes and the *Precepts* evaporates upon closer examination.

Centrone notes four points in which he finds parallels between the *Precepts* and the pseudo-Pythagorean ethical treatises (1990: 38–41):

1. The divine does not neglect humanity but assists it and takes care of it.
2. The divine directs all things and man needs the supervision of the divine.
3. Rulers have in mind the good of their subjects.
4. The importance assigned to the concepts of τάξις and συμμετρία.

He is certainly right that each of these four points is found in both the *Precepts* and the pseudo-Pythagorean ethical treatises. This fact in itself, however, does not show that the pseudo-Pythagorean ethical treatises relied on the *Precepts* for these points, since all of these points can be found in texts other than the *Precepts*. As noted above the need for divine supervision of human beings was a common theme of discussion in the late fifth and fourth centuries appearing notably in Plato but also in Isocrates, Critias and Xenophon (see the commentary on fr. 8). Similarly the idea that rulers should have in mind the good of their subjects is found in Book 1 of the *Republic* and may, in fact, be the most common view in the Greek world, a view that the first book of the *Republic* suggests sophists such as Thrasymachus challenged. Finally, it is undoubtedly true that order and symmetry play a role in the *Precepts* but they are central in other texts as well, see Plato (e.g., *Gorgias* 503e–504d; *Philebus* 64e–65a), Aristotle (*Metaph.* 1078a36) and even Democritus (fr. 191). Thus, the emphasis on order and symmetry in the pseudo-Pythagorean writings need not be explained by reference to the *Precepts*.

Centrone tries to buttress these more general points with references to parallels in specific language between the *Precepts* and the pseudo-

Pythagorean ethical treatises, but for various reasons they do not succeed in demonstrating a connection between the *Precepts* and these treatises. Centrone (1990: 40) notes that pseudo-Hippodamus uses two verbs (ἐπιβλέπειν, ὀλιγωρεῖν) that are used in the *Precepts*' assertion that we should suppose that the gods "oversee" and do not "neglect" human beings (fr. 8, line 7). This is certainly true, but pseudo-Hippodamus uses the verbs in a considerably different context. The passage in Hippodamus is not giving advice on how to act as the *Precepts* are, but rather describing the destructive views of the sophists who say that the gods do not pay attention to us and neglect us (101.27 Thesleff). The verbs are not in themselves rare, and since they appear in this quite different context in pseudo-Hippodamus, there is no reason to think that pseudo-Hippodamus was relying on the *Precepts* when writing this passage (for more on pseudo-Hippodamus see the commentary on fr. 8). Again Centrone notes that in fragment 5 of the *Precepts* the two verbs used when asserting that "to prize (ἀγαπᾶν) and love (στέργειν) customs and practices that are fine . . . is truly to be lovers of what is beautiful and fine" are also paired in pseudo-Metopos' *On Virtue*. However, once again the verbs are used in a radically different context in pseudo-Metopos (117.5–7). In that passage pseudo-Metopos makes a distinction between three different elements of virtue: reason, power and choice. He then argues that it is characteristic of choice to love and enjoy (ἀγαπᾶν καὶ στέργειν), which thus belongs to both the rational and irrational part of the soul. None of these concepts are involved in fragment 5 of the *Precepts* and it seems very unlikely that pseudo-Metopos was thinking of the quite different passage in the *Precepts* when writing this section. Moreover, the two verbs in question are paired in other authors besides the *Precepts* before the likely date of pseudo-Metopos (e.g., Teles, Περὶ ἀπαθείας Hense 1909: 57.6).

Before leaving the discussion of the relationship of the *Precepts* to the pseudo-Pythagorean literature, it is necessary to turn to the three-part treatise known as the *Tripartitum* (*On Education*, *On Statesmanship* and *On Nature*), which was composed before 200 BC and ascribed to Pythagoras himself (see Diog. Laert. 8.6–7 and Centrone 2014: 317). Zhmud regards the *Tripartitum* as relying on the *Precepts* (2012a: 72 n. 47) but does not present new arguments for this position, referring instead to Diels' seminal article on the *Tripartitum* (1890: 465–7). Our primary source for the contents of the *Tripartitum* is Diogenes Laertius

who provides an account of some of the contents of the three treatises (8.9–10). The material provided here in Diogenes is paralleled with only a few changes in Diodorus 10.9.3–5, which suggests that Diodorus too used the *Tripartitum*, although Zhmud suggests that the similarity is to be explained by both Diodorus and the *Tripartitum* using the *Precepts* (2012a: 72 n. 47). Thus it is important to consider in detail the connection between the *Precepts* and the *Tripartitum* and Diels' arguments for that connection.

The most significant parallel between the texts is that Diodorus, Diogenes and the *Precepts* all divide human life into four ages (boy, young man, man and old man). There is a corruption of the text in both Diodorus and Diogenes so that two alternate terms for young man appear and the term for man falls out but otherwise the terminology is the same (see the commentary on fr. 2). Moreover, in Diogenes (but not Diodorus) the four ages are each identified as lasting twenty years, and, although in the section of the *Precepts* where the ages are set out this is not stated directly (fr. 2 lines 7–15, fr. 9 lines 14–41, 140), the *Precepts* do seem to be working on the assumption that the ages are twenty years in length as well (fr. 4 lines 8–10). There is thus a fairly specific parallel between the *Precepts* and the *Tripartitum* as reported by Diogenes but the significance of this parallel does not become clear until we examine both the broader context of the parallel passages in the *Precepts* and in the *Tripartitum* and also the broader discussion of age groups in the Greek world.

The agreement between the *Tripartitum* and the *Precepts* that human life is divided into four age groups of twenty years each becomes much less prominent in light of the fact that the postulation of age groups was widespread in Greek culture and that the division of human life into four ages was, in fact, the most widespread (for details see the commentary on fr. 2). For example, Xenophon identifies four age groups both in Sparta and also in Persia (*Lac.* 3.1ff.; *Cyr.* 1.2.4). Four age groups also appear in the Hippocratic corpus (e.g., *Aph.* 1.13). Most conspicuously of all, in the Hippocratic treatise *On Regimen* 1.33 there are four age groups with the exact same names as found in the *Precepts*. *On Regimen* does not specify that the four ages are twenty years each, so that this may remain a distinctive Pythagorean feature, but it should be clear that in adopting a four-fold division of ages the *Tripartitum* is not following an approach that is to be found only in the *Precepts* but rather one that is

widespread in Greek culture (for further discussion of the age groups in the *Precepts* and Greek culture see the commentary on fr. 2).

There are further grounds for doubt that the *Tripartitum* as reported by Diogenes and reflected in Diodorus drew on the *Precepts* for the four ages, since both Diogenes and Diodorus report important additional material that finds no parallel in the *Precepts*. Most significantly both draw a parallel between the ages of human beings and the seasons so that the child is equated with spring, the young man with summer, the man with fall and the old man with winter. There is no trace of this parallel in the *Precepts*, where the seasons are not mentioned. Moreover, this sort of comparison between the natural order and the life of man is alien to the straightforward style of the *Precepts*, which avoids such metaphor. Now, it could be that the later tradition took over the division of human life into four twenty-year parts from the *Precepts* and elaborated this with the parallel to the seasons so that the *Precepts* would still be the original source for the four ages. However, as we have seen, the division of human life into four parts is common in Greek thought as a whole and it would not be surprising if Pythagoreans other than the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* had such a division. It is thus just as possible that this was a division of ages that was adopted by even earlier Pythagoreans than the fourth-century Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* and that the connection of the ages to the seasons was already present early in the tradition but dropped by the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts*. Indeed, Diels argues that the parallel between the four seasons and the ages of human life goes back to a supposed fifth-century Pythagorean poem, the *Sacred Discourse* (ἱερὸς λόγος), where the parallel with the seasons would indeed be more in place (1890: 465–6). Most scholars now doubt that such a poem existed in the fifth century and regard it as a later fabrication (Centrone 2014: 318), but this does not rule out the presence of the connection between the seasons and the ages of human beings in some other early Pythagorean source, which then is the source for the *Tripartitum* rather than the *Precepts*. Are there any more specific features of the passages that show that the *Precepts* must be the source of the *Tripartitum*?

Diels argues that the development of the ideas about sexuality that occur in the context of the four ages in the *Tripartitum* is similar to what is found in the *Precepts* and thus constitutes the evidence that the *Tripartitum* was relying specifically on the *Precepts* for its account of

the four ages (1890: 466; Schorn 2013 seems to follow Diels but gives no new arguments). However, close examination of the passages shows that the opposite conclusion is more likely to be true: the differences in the specifics of the treatment of sexuality suggest that the *Tripartitum* was not relying on the *Precepts*. In the passages in the *Precepts* where the four ages are mentioned there is no discussion of sexuality (fr. 2 and fr. 9, lines 14–41). However, in a separate passage it is asserted that the young should not practice sex and preferably not even know about it before the age of twenty (fr. 4, cf. fr. 9, 135–8). On the other hand the passage from the *Tripartitum* quoted by Diogenes and followed by Diodorus presents two precepts about sexuality immediately before the description of the four ages. Other than clearly wanting to put limits on sexuality there are no specific parallels between the precepts on sex in the *Tripartitum* and what is said on the topic in the *Precepts*. Thus, the *Tripartitum* says nothing about the *Precepts*' prohibition on sex before twenty. On the other hand the *Tripartitum* urges that sex not be practiced at all in the summer and infrequently in the winter, while the *Precepts* make no connections between sex and the seasons. Similarly the *Tripartitum* reports an anecdote according to which Pythagoras was asked when one should engage in sex and replied "when you wish not to be master of yourself." Nothing of this sort is found in the *Precepts*. Thus, *pace* Diels, the treatment of sexuality is not developed in similar ways in the *Precepts* and the *Tripartitum* and there is nothing to suggest that the comments on sexuality in the *Tripartitum* were derived from the *Precepts*.

We are left, then, with the one significant similarity between the *Tripartitum* and the *Precepts*, that both divide human life into ages that are twenty years long. The question is how to explain that similarity. The problem with explaining it by postulating that the *Tripartitum* derived its account of the divisions of human life from the *Precepts* is that all of the rest of the presentation of the four ages in the *Tripartitum* and the discussion of sexuality that precedes it find no parallel in the *Precepts*. So we would have to suppose that all this material was added by the *Tripartitum* from another source or that it was all in other parts of the *Precepts* that have not survived. These are possibilities but we have to make many fewer suppositions if we simply say that the *Tripartitum* drew on a different source or sources in which the parallel between the ages and the seasons was prominent. This source and hence the

Tripartitum might owe the idea that the ages are twenty years long to the *Precepts* or it might be that this was an idea developed early in the Pythagorean tradition which was later followed by the *Precepts*. In the first case the *Precepts* represent one relatively minor source for the *Tripartitum*, a source that was not used directly but rather that influenced the direct source of the *Tripartitum*, or in the second case the *Precepts* may have no influence at all on the *Tripartitum*.

In conclusion we can see that the *Precepts* exercised significant influence on Stobaeus, Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* and pseudo-Ocellus. Apart from that, the evidence for influence of the *Precepts* on the later Pythagorean tradition is very limited. One phrase in pseudo-Archytas is probably owed to the *Precepts*. The *Precepts* might be one source among many for a passage in Porphyry on the goals of human life, might be one source among many for pseudo-Zaleucus' argument that people need to believe in the existence of the gods and might have indirectly influenced the *Tripartitum*'s division of human life into twenty-year periods. The fact is that the precepts which appear with great frequency in the later tradition in authors such as Diogenes Laertius, Porphyry and Diodorus show little evidence of deriving from the *Precepts*. Thus, Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* should not be regarded as some sort of Ur-text from which most later lists of precepts derive. Clearly a number of different sources lie behind those later lists. This makes a great deal of sense if we recognize that Aristoxenus' *Precepts* were not an attempt to gather together all Pythagorean precepts known to Aristoxenus from all earlier and contemporary times and places but rather an attempt to reflect the precepts of a specific group of Pythagoreans from a specific time and place, i.e. the Pythagoreans around Xenophilus with whom Aristoxenus associated as a young man when he came to Athens and before he joined Aristotle's school. The precepts of these Pythagoreans are remarkable for their coherence and rationality but are not full of memorable anecdote and clever phrases (although there are some of the latter) so that they were not a particularly favored source in the later doxographical tradition for Pythagoreanism.

8 | History of Scholarship on the *Pythagorean Precepts*

The history of scholarship on Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* is mainly one of neglect. There has never been a comprehensive book-length treatment of them published in any language. Less than thirty pages of published scholarship in total were devoted to analyzing them in the twentieth century. This is in some ways surprising. Aristoxenus has always been a controversial character, but he was regarded as one of the most important sources for Pythagoreanism by Rohde (1871–2 = 1901) and Zeller (1919) in the later nineteenth century. Rohde distrusts what Aristoxenus says about Pythagoras himself but asserts that what he says about the later Pythagoreans has “the highest credibility” (1871–2 = 1901: 149–50). Zeller suggested that Aristoxenus presented the Pythagoreans in his own form of expression and with some admixture of his own thought, but nonetheless concludes, “what he presents agrees with historical probability and what our other evidence suggests” (in the 1963 reprint of 1919: 1.1: 569; cf. 2.2: 883–4). This general respect for Aristoxenus' presentation of Pythagoreanism is then enshrined in Hermann Diels' epoch-making collection of the fragments of the Presocratics at the beginning of the twentieth century (*Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* – 3rd edn. 1912). In section 58 Diels (later editions by Kranz in 1934 and 1951) collected what he regarded as the evidence for the Pythagorean School. This section has four parts (A–D) and part D is entitled “From the *Pythagorean Precepts* and *The Pythagorean Way of Life* of Aristoxenus.” Despite the obvious importance of Aristoxenus for these scholars neither they nor their contemporaries provided any detailed analysis of the fragments of the *Precepts*.

The fullest treatments of the *Precepts* ever completed are to be found in two early twentieth-century German dissertations, both of which were written in Latin. Joannes Mewaldt wrote the first one in Berlin in 1904, under the direction of two of the most distinguished German classicists, the aforementioned Hermann Diels and Ulrich von Wilamowitz Möllendorf. It is 57 pages long and as its title suggests (“De Aristoxeni

Pythagoricis Sententiis et Vita Pythagorica” – “On the *Pythagorean Precepts* and *Pythagorean Way of Life* of Aristoxenus”) deals not just with the *Precepts* but also with another of Aristoxenus’ works on the Pythagoreans, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. In fact, one of the central theses of the dissertation is that these two works of Aristoxenus were quite distinct and Mewaldt provides a reconstruction of each work that arranges the fragments in order. Diels refers to his student’s distinction between the two works in a note to his collection of the fragments of Aristoxenus on the Pythagoreans (p. 467 in the 6th edn. of DK) and notes which fragments would belong to which works according to Mewaldt’s results, but does not incorporate Mewaldt’s results into his presentation of the fragments. As a result the collection of fragments in DK is “somewhat helter-skelter” (Burkert 1972: 101).

The second dissertation was completed by Hermann Täger in Göttingen in 1922, once again under the direction of two distinguished German classicists, Max Pohlenz and Richard Reitzenstein. It is 98 pages but exists only in typescript, with Greek written in by hand. Täger argues, against Mewaldt, that Aristoxenus wrote just one book on the Pythagoreans, in which he cited the precepts of the Pythagoreans first and then proved them by examples from their life. He accordingly entitles his dissertation “De Aristoxeni libro Pythagorico” (“On the Pythagorean Book of Aristoxenus”). Täger espoused what would become the standard view of the *Precepts*, i.e. Aristoxenus wanted to glorify his Pythagorean teachers at the expense of Socrates and Plato and accordingly borrowed ideas from Plato and Aristotle and assigned them to the Pythagoreans. Täger’s dissertation consists in large part of an attempt to show the parallels between what Aristoxenus says about the Pythagoreans and Platonic and Aristotelian texts. Nonetheless, Täger’s dissertation was not much used by later scholars and is not mentioned by either Wehrli or Rivaud who are largely responsible for establishing the standard modern view of the *Precepts*.

In the same year that Täger completed his dissertation, A. Delatte devoted fourteen pages to the *Precepts* in his *Essai sur la politique pythagoricienne* (1922a: 42–56). These fourteen pages would remain the most detailed published presentation of the *Precepts* for eighty years. Delatte continues the nineteenth-century tradition of treating the *Precepts* as a reliable account of Pythagoreanism, regarding them as Aristoxenus’ report of what he learned from his Pythagorean friends in

the fourth century. Delatte does not provide any new critical analysis of the *Precepts*, but focuses on the main themes in Pythagorean ethics that they set forth and confirms their fourth-century origin by showing their connection to broader fourth-century literature, such as the Attic orators and Xenophon.

In 1938 Rodolfo Mondolfo, in the notes to his Italian translation of Zeller (1938 vol. 1.2: 360–4), defended the reliability of Aristoxenus' account of Pythagoreanism against attacks by Lévy (1926: 45) and Frank (1923: 260; 1943). He rebuts their claim that Aristoxenus had no special sources for Pythagoreanism beyond those of his teacher Aristotle (see also Huffman 2012a: 127). Mondolfo emphasizes that Aristoxenus, along with Timaeus and Dicaearchus, shares an interest in using reliable historical sources in contrast to someone like Heraclides, but he says essentially nothing specifically about the *Precepts*.

The most influential studies of the *Precepts* in the eighty years between 1930 and 2010 were surprisingly brief. In 1934 A. Rivaud, who was not mentioned by Mondolfo, argued that in the *Precepts* Aristoxenus, by using texts from Plato's *Republic*, constructed a Pythagorean politics that no Pythagorean author had ever expressly formulated. He claims to find in the *Precepts* "some of the arrangements that are most characteristic of Platonic political science as it is presented in the *Republic*" (1932: 786). He argues that at bottom the doctrine of the *Republic* and the *Precepts* accord completely; if we were to accept Aristoxenus' presentation of Pythagorean doctrine as accurate, it would be necessary to recognize that there was little which was original to Plato in the *Republic* (1932: 787). One of the odd things about Rivaud's article is that he devotes only three pages to considering the supposed parallels between Plato's *Republic* and the *Precepts*. He goes on to suggest that it was not Aristoxenus himself who developed Pythagorean political theory out of Plato but the fourth-century Pythagoreans themselves, whom Aristoxenus faithfully reports. The Pythagoreans had contact with Plato in his travels to Italy and Sicily and saw him as a kindred spirit and did not carefully distinguish between what they learned from Plato and what he learned from them.

In 1945 (second edition 1967) Wehrli published what is undoubtedly the most influential treatment of Aristoxenus and the *Precepts*: his edition of the fragments of Aristoxenus as part of his great collection of the fragments of the members of the school of Aristotle. Wehrli includes the

fragments of the *Precepts* as fragments 33–41 of his collection of all the fragments of Aristoxenus. His discussion of them is very limited, however, just four and a half pages of commentary. Wehrli states what has become the standard view of the *Precepts* when he says, “The hallmark of the *Precepts* is the laying claim to Academic and Peripatetic material for the Pythagoreans” (1967: 58). Wehrli makes no reference to Täger’s earlier development of this idea. He does refer to Rivaud primarily to reject the latter’s attempt to shift the blame for stealing Platonic and Aristotelian material from Aristoxenus to the Pythagoreans themselves.

The views of Wehrli and Rivaud were adopted in the most important book on Pythagoreanism of the twentieth century, Walter Burkert’s *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism* (German edn. 1962; revised English edn. tr. by E. Minar 1972). Aristoxenus is hardly Burkert’s main focus, however, and he only devotes one paragraph and a couple of notes to the *Precepts* (1972: 107–8). His presentation is based on the arguments of Rivaud and Wehrli, and he notes the neglect of Täger’s dissertation, which presented a similar thesis. Burkert concludes that in the *Precepts* “fourth-century ethics and not ancient Pythagorean tradition, is being set forth.” Burkert does, however, show some ambivalence in his presentation. He goes on to say that it is “not that Aristoxenus invented it all; he had [legitimate] sources of information, but . . . he interpreted Pythagoreanism in accordance with his own preconceptions” (108). It is not clear that Burkert is presenting a consistent case here. If, following Wehrli, Rivaud (and Täger) he thinks that Aristoxenus did steal Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines and assign them to the Pythagoreans, this is surely something more radical than just “interpreting Pythagoreanism in accordance with his own preconceptions.” This tension can be found in the views of other modern scholars.

At about the same time as the first edition of Burkert, Maria Timpanaro Cardini published a collection of the testimonia and fragments of the Pythagoreans with limited commentary in Italian (vol. 1, 1958; vol. 2, 1962; vol. 3, 1964). With some notable exceptions her presentation of the fragments of Aristoxenus on the Pythagoreans follows that of Diels and Kranz, including their decision not to distinguish clearly the fragments from the *Precepts* from those of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (Timpanaro Cardini 1964: 280–333). She also embraces the earlier high valuation of Aristoxenus’ testimony on Pythagoreanism. She rejects Wehrli’s thesis, arguing that if one maintains that concepts in the

Precepts derive from Plato and Aristotle one should show that these concepts would be quite inconceivable and ahistorical if assigned to the Pythagoreans. Yet the evidence of Plato and Aristotle themselves suggests a connection between Plato and the Pythagoreans, so that it would not be surprising if Plato had been influenced by the Pythagoreans (1964: 275–7). Timpanaro Cardini emphasizes that Aristoxenus had excellent sources for Pythagoreanism and maintains that the way of life presented in the *Precepts* is that praised by Plato in the *Republic* (1964: 278).

Most of the major works on Pythagoreanism in the later twentieth and early twenty-first centuries contribute little new to our understanding of the *Precepts*. De Vogel (1966) clearly regards Aristoxenus as an important source and quotes a number of passages from the *Precepts* in trying to reconstruct Pythagorean ethics, but she never explicitly mentions the *Precepts* or provides a critical discussion of them. The remaining important treatments of Pythagoreanism in the period either fail to mention the *Precepts* at all (Riedweg 2002) or follow the Rivaud–Wehrli–Burkert interpretation. Thus Philip, although he makes no explicit reference to the *Precepts*, says that Aristoxenus derived some of the material he assigned to the Pythagoreans from Aristotle and invented other material so that it is impossible to separate fact from fiction in what he reports (1966: 14–15). Kahn has little to say about the *Precepts* but follows Wehrli’s view in saying that Aristoxenus assigned features of Plato’s and Aristotle’s ethical teaching to the Pythagoreans (2001: 70–1).

In general the *Precepts* have not attracted much attention from scholars outside of Pythagorean studies, probably because of the doubts about their accuracy raised by the standard view, but two exceptions to this rule should be noted. Ludwig Edelstein in his famous monograph, *The Hippocratic Oath*, which argues that the oath is specifically Pythagorean in origin, relies heavily on the *Precepts* in reconstructing his view of Pythagorean ethics. He has no hesitations about the accuracy of the *Precepts*, probably because he is writing (1943) before the first edition of Wehrli (in 1945), and he relies on the collection of fragments in DK. Kathy Gaca, in her book on sexual morality in Greek thinkers and early Christianity (*The Making of Fornication* 2003), devotes a chapter to “The Reproductive Technology of the Pythagoreans.” This chapter relies heavily on the *Precepts*. She seems to assume that the *Precepts* are an accurate presentation of Pythagorean views and does not confront the standard view.

The most detailed recent treatment of the Pythagoreans (Zhmud 2012a) in general follows the Rivaud–Wehrli–Burkert line but shows some of the ambivalence seen in Burkert. Zhmud says that all of Aristoxenus’ works on the Pythagoreans are “blatantly apologetic” while at the same time concluding that his reports “on the whole faithfully reflected the realia of the late 5th and early 4th centuries” (2012a: 64). It seems difficult for a report to be blatantly apologetic but nonetheless faithful to the facts. Of all Aristoxenus’ works, Zhmud is, in fact, most negative about the *Precepts*. He follows the dominant interpretation since Wehrli, that the *Precepts* adopt a number of characteristically Platonic positions (2012a: 65, n. 17). He says that it is thus not always possible to separate confidently the Pythagorean stratum from the theories of the Academy and Lyceum (2102a: 65, n.17). However, when reconstructing the Pythagorean way of life with its renunciation of luxury, excess and immoderation he cites passages from the *Precepts* in support (2012a: 352). Zhmud also makes the interesting observations 1) that Aristoxenus avoided reporting anything about the Pythagoreans that went beyond the norm of the day and 2) that what he assigns them has much in common with traditional wisdom (2012a: 156, n. 77). But this leads again to a strangely ambivalent picture of an Aristoxenus who ascribes traditional wisdom that does not go beyond the norm of the day to his Pythagoreans but at the same time feels compelled to ascribe to them distinctively Platonic theories, which are hardly “normal.”

Zhmud’s treatment of the *Precepts* follows the pattern of the scholarship reviewed above in that he spends very little time discussing them. His primary treatment of them is found in a long note (2012a: 65, n. 17). He devotes less than a paragraph to them in the main text. Yet, Aristoxenus has excellent credentials as a source for Pythagoreanism. There was no other fourth-century author who had more direct contact with Pythagoreans than Aristoxenus. Why such neglect of what he tells us about the Pythagorean way of life in the *Pythagorean Precepts*? There are at least three reasons for this. First, the standard view holds that the content of the *Precepts* themselves is largely composed of Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines ascribed to the Pythagoreans by Aristoxenus so that proponents of that view dismiss the *Precepts* out of hand and naturally spend little time discussing them. It is noticeable that some scholars who adopt the standard view somewhat inconsistently use parts of the *Precepts* to reconstruct their view of fourth-century Pythagoreanism, evidently

thinking that they can distinguish the true Pythagoreanism from Aristoxenus' additions (see Burkert and Zhmud above).

The second and third reasons for the neglect of the *Precepts* have their origin outside of the *Precepts* themselves in two prominent themes of the scholarship on Aristoxenus in general, each based on key texts of Aristoxenus. According to the first theme Aristoxenus resolutely presents Pythagoras and Pythagoreanism in a highly rationalized fashion stripped of all mystical and religious aspects. This view is above all based on a report in Gellius (4.11 = fr. 25 Wehrli) that Aristoxenus presented Pythagoras as rejecting two of the most prominent dietary taboos in the Pythagorean tradition: the avoidance of beans and the ban on eating meat. According to Aristoxenus Pythagoras liked no vegetable more than beans and not only ate meat but was particularly fond of young pigs and kids. This report probably appeared in Aristoxenus' *Life of Pythagoras*. Some scholars such as Zhmud, who think that the mystical side of Pythagoreanism has been overemphasized, welcome the rationalism (2012a: 65 "on the whole the reports of this well-informed historian, – if one makes allowances for his tendentious and polemical bent – are clearly preferable to the legendary tradition which he disputes"), but most scholars have seen it as clear evidence of Aristoxenus' willingness tendentiously to distort the tradition. Closer examination of the passage in Gellius, in fact, suggests that Aristoxenus' report about Pythagoras' fondness for young pigs and kids, far from rationalizing, has a basis in the sacral role of these animals, which is in turn based on a Pythagorean myth about the golden age. Aristoxenus may indeed be tendentious in responding to mistaken views of Pythagoreanism in the fourth century but his account of Pythagoras' beliefs may well also be correct (Huffman 2012a). Nonetheless, Aristoxenus' supposed rationalizing treatment of Pythagoreanism has a long history in scholarship, and for many scholars this is a clear sign of his willingness to distort facts which in turn leads those scholars to neglect Aristoxenus' evidence including the *Precepts*.

The second dominant theme in scholarship on Aristoxenus has been to turn him into a radical Pythagorean partisan, who disparages all other philosophy in order to glorify the Pythagoreans. In part this is based on his presentation of Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans, which is almost uniformly positive, but it is based even more on his supposedly negative presentation of Socrates and Plato in his lives of these two giants of

Greek philosophy. After all didn't he say that Plato plagiarized the *Republic* from Protagoras' *Contradictory Arguments* (Diog. Laert. 3.37–8) and that Socrates had a bad temper (fr. 54a Wehrli) and was married to two women at once (fr. 54a and 54b Wehrli)? As in the case of Aristoxenus' rationalism there is strong evidence that his presentation of Socrates and Plato has been misunderstood. He does present these two figures "warts and all" but closer study of the texts in question suggests that there need not have been any malice involved and that his presentation of them may have been more balanced and hence more accurate than the more traditional idealized accounts (Schorn 2012; Dillon 2012; Huffman 2012b). Nonetheless, the traditional view has been that Aristoxenus savagely attacked Socrates and Plato and that this was because of his rabid Pythagoreanism. Anyone who takes this view is likely to set aside with little discussion Aristoxenus' evidence on the Pythagoreans, including the *Precepts*.

I have responded to these two themes in scholarship on Aristoxenus (his supposed rationalism and his supposed malice towards Socrates and Plato) in other places (Huffman 2012a and 2012b; see also Schorn 2012 and Dillon 2012). If we remove these misconceptions about Aristoxenus, we have good reason to pay close attention to his evidence about Pythagoreanism including the *Precepts*. However, whether my response to these two themes is convincing or not, it is the evidence of the *Precepts* themselves that is most important for determining their credibility. The survey of scholarship given above shows that proponents of the standard view of the *Precepts* have not based their view on a thorough study of them. Rivaud and Wehrli combined spend less than eight pages on them and later scholars such as Burkert and Zhmud spend considerably less time on them, contenting themselves with one or two examples. One of the purposes of this book is to examine all of the likely fragments of the *Precepts* in some detail to see whether they can be said to rely on distinctively Aristotelian and Platonic doctrines as the standard view suggests. Thus, the full rebuttal of the standard view is to be found scattered throughout the commentary on the *Precepts* found below. Here in the Introduction my goal is to provide a critical evaluation of the presuppositions of the standard view, to respond to the most prominent arguments for it and summarize the main points for an alternative view of the nature of the *Precepts*.

9 | The Standard View of the *Pythagorean Precepts*

As we have seen, most recent scholars (e.g., Burkert, Kahn, Zhmud) depend on Rivaud and Wehrli for what can be called the standard view of the *Precepts*. These earlier scholars state the view in a very uncompromising fashion. Rivaud proposes that “Aristoxenus with the help of texts from the *Republic* has reconstructed a Pythagorean politics that no Pythagorean author had ever expressly formulated” (1932: 784) and later adds, “if Aristoxenus presents Pythagorean doctrine it is necessary to recognize that Plato’s originality is mediocre” (1932: 787). Wehrli then expands this point to include not just Plato but also Aristotle and the Peripatetics. He asserts “the hallmark of the *Precepts* is the laying claim to academic and peripatetic material for the Pythagoreans” and “Aristoxenus constructs his old Pythagorean ethical theory consciously to the detriment of Platonic and Aristotelian authority” (1967: 58). Earlier than either of these scholars, in his dissertation Täger had put forth a similar view. He says that Aristoxenus never forgot the Pythagoreanism by which he was excited as a young man and “so composed his books on Pythagoras, Socrates and Plato in order to belittle the authority of Socrates and Plato so that the praise and glory of the Pythagoreans would shine forth the more” (1922: 90). The standard view thus levels a very serious charge against Aristoxenus, accusing him of incredibly bad faith in his reports on the Pythagorean moral precepts. In what follows I will argue that the standard view is mistaken. My argument will in part be the same as in my article in *Classical Quarterly* (2008a) and for the convenience of the reader I will repeat here a number of things that I said there, but I have also developed and expanded that argument in important ways.

It is important to note that the standard view is a creation of modern scholarship and is not to be found in the ancient tradition. No ancient author suggests that Aristoxenus stole Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines and assigned them to the Pythagoreans in the *Precepts*. Indeed, we know nothing of what the ancients thought of the *Precepts*, since the only

references to them are the lemmata to the seven fragments excerpted by Stobaeus, which identify them as coming from the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus. If there is no direct evidence for the ancient view towards the *Pythagorean Precepts*, is there evidence for the ancient view of Aristoxenus' other works on the Pythagoreans? There is again no explicit evidence, but these works were used without comment in the later tradition on Pythagoreanism, so that they were clearly regarded as important and reliable sources (see [Chapter 7](#) above).

Even if there is no explicit assertion about the nature of the *Precepts* in the ancient tradition, there is some direct evidence about the *Precepts* and Aristoxenus' life that suggests a simple and straightforward account of the *Precepts*, which is the baseline against which the standard view should be judged. This straightforward account consists of the following main points: 1) Stobaeus' testimony shows that there was a work called *Pythagorean Precepts* ascribed to Aristoxenus in the ancient tradition. 2) The fragments of the *Precepts* excerpted by Stobaeus do not explicitly mention the Pythagoreans but instead refer to an unnamed "they," who are naturally taken to be the Pythagoreans, given the title of the work. 3) The fragments of the *Precepts* then report what "they" thought or supposed on a series of ethical topics. 4) The fragments do not praise, criticize or otherwise comment on these precepts; they simply report them. 5) There is no fourth-century figure outside the Pythagorean school who was better placed to know about the Pythagoreans than Aristoxenus. He grew up in the city of Tarentum when it was under the rule of the Pythagorean Archytas, and he refers to his own father Spintharus for reports about Archytas (fr. 30 Wehrli). The biography of Aristoxenus in the *Suda* indicates that when he left Tarentum he came to the Greek mainland where he eventually became a member of Aristotle's school. Before joining the Peripatos, however, he associated with a group of Pythagoreans that he regarded as the last of the Pythagoreans (Diog. Laert. 8.46). These included Xenophilus, who is also called Aristoxenus' teacher in the *Suda* (fr. 1 Wehrli), as well as a group of Pythagoreans from the city-state of Phlius near Corinth. One of these Phliasians was named Echecrates, who is very likely to be the Echecrates to whom Phaedo narrates the events of Socrates' last day in Plato's dialogue, *Phaedo*. Plato explicitly tells us that this narration took place in Phlius (*Phaedo* 57a). 6) The *Precepts* then make sense as what these Pythagorean associates of Aristoxenus reported to him about the

Pythagorean way of life. 7) In support of this conclusion it is important to note that nowhere in the fragments of the *Precepts* does Aristoxenus ever cite another authority, so it does not appear that he is relying on second-hand accounts of others but rather on what he directly heard from the Pythagoreans. 8) Moreover, the *Pythagorean Precepts* are presented as a unified whole with no suggestion that Aristoxenus reported the varying views of different groups of Pythagoreans. This makes it likely that what he presents is not a compilation of views he heard in different places, e.g., in the Tarentum of his youth and later in Athens. Instead he appears to present one coherent set of precepts. Given what we know of his biography the natural supposition is that these are the precepts that were presented to him as a young man by the Pythagoreans from Phlius and his Pythagorean teacher Xenophilus.

The meager evidence about Aristoxenus' relation to these Pythagoreans does not permit us to give a precise reconstruction of his relation to his source material but some plausible suggestions can be made. There is no evidence for any written sources on which Aristoxenus could be drawing and nothing in the surviving fragments suggests that he is drawing on a written text. Accordingly it seems most likely that the *Precepts* are based on oral sources. Since Aristoxenus is reported to be the pupil of Xenophilus, it is likely that the *Precepts* are not simply reflections of things Aristoxenus heard on various occasions but rather represent what he was systematically taught by Xenophilus or the Pythagoreans from Phlius. It seems plausible that these Pythagoreans had composed a sort of oral catechism for training in the Pythagorean way of life. If this were so, Aristoxenus heard what he reports not on just a few occasions; rather the material was presented to him repeatedly as part of his training. There is no way to be certain whether the Pythagoreans in question ever disagreed with one another or whether what they taught changed over time. Nothing in the *Precepts* suggests any diversity of opinion, however, so either the teaching to which Aristoxenus was exposed was accepted by all the Pythagoreans with whom he associated or he chose not to present any divergent views. Aristoxenus will have inevitably shaped what he remembered of this teaching to some extent but detailed study of the language of the *Precepts* in the commentary below does not suggest that he rewrote what he learned in any radical way so that there are not, e.g., extensive examples of technical Peripatetic terminology.

It is also important to ask who Aristoxenus' intended audience was. There seem to be two main motivations for the *Precepts*. First, they can be seen as part of the Peripatetic attempt to document the views of earlier thinkers. Aristotle himself typically presented the views of his predecessors in a given field before presenting his own views, most famously in the first book of the *Metaphysics*. His students then wrote histories of other areas of knowledge, e.g., Eudemus wrote histories of arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy and Meno wrote a history of medicine. Aristoxenus probably felt that he had particular expertise in the views of the Pythagoreans and was thus the logical person to document the history of Pythagoreanism as part of this general Peripatetic program. There is, however, evidence that Aristoxenus was not dispassionately reporting the views of earlier Pythagoreans. His reports concerning Pythagoras in particular suggest that he was anxious to correct mistaken ideas about Pythagoreanism (Huffman 2012a). Thus it seems important to him that people understand that Pythagoras was not a radical ascetic and in particular was not a vegetarian (fr. 25 Wehrli = Gell. 4.11). It may well be then that the *Precepts* were partly written to provide an accurate account of the principles of the Pythagorean way of life as an antidote to certain mistaken accounts in general circulation. Aristoxenus thus probably directed his work not only to his colleagues in the Peripatos and other philosophers but also to the broader public.

Some scholars have tried to argue that it was chronologically impossible for Aristoxenus to have known Xenophilus and the Pythagoreans from Phlius (Frank 1923: 223, n. 4; Lévy 1926: 45–6, n. 5) but this is not true. The *Suda* says he was from the 111th Olympiad (336–332 BC), which, in accordance with standard practice, indicates when he flourished, i.e. when he was forty years old. This would mean that he was born c. 375. If Echecrates was 20 in 399 when Phaedo talks to him, he could still be alive in 350, when a twenty-five year old Aristoxenus plausibly came to the Greek mainland. We do not have firm dates for Xenophilus, but he was famously long-lived and there is no reason to doubt that Aristoxenus studied with him around 350, probably in Athens where Xenophilus came to live (Lucian, *The Long-lived* 18).

On the surface then the *Precepts* appear to be invaluable primary evidence about the Pythagorean way of life in the fourth century reported by a source (Aristoxenus) with extensive first-hand evidence. Moreover, it is crucial to recognize that we have clear evidence

independent of Aristoxenus that there was a distinctive Pythagorean way of life in the late fifth and early fourth century. Plato has Socrates say in the *Republic* that still today (the late fifth century if the reference is to the dramatic date of the dialogue or the early fourth if to the date of composition) there were Pythagoreans who stood out among others for living a Pythagorean way of life (600b). It seems quite likely that Plato is referring to Pythagoreans like Echecrates, whom he mentions in the *Phaedo* and whom Aristoxenus knew, but whether he has Echecrates specifically in mind or not, Plato gives clear testimony that there were Pythagoreans living a distinctive way of life in his time. It is natural to suppose that this way of life was, at the least, something like what Aristoxenus would report from his association with Xenophilus and the Pythagoreans from Phlius, and it is possible that Plato is thinking precisely of these Pythagoreans. Plato's attitude to the Pythagorean way of life in the *Republic* passage is clearly positive, so we would expect its basic principles to be ones of which he would approve, at least in general terms.

Thus, the ancient tradition suggests that Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* are the rules governing the way of life followed by the fourth-century Pythagoreans with whom Aristoxenus associated. We have virtually no indication of what that way of life was like apart from the *Precepts*, and we should only reject their testimony on the basis of strong evidence. We cannot reject them because they do not fit with our preconceptions about what fourth-century Pythagoreanism should be like, because we cannot point to any basis for those preconceptions that is more authoritative than the *Precepts* themselves. It is true that elsewhere in the Pythagorean tradition, starting already in the Hellenistic period and flourishing in the first centuries BC and AD there was a luxuriant tradition of treatises forged in the name of Pythagoras and other early Pythagoreans. If we were dealing with a treatise purporting to be by Pythagoras or an early Pythagorean, we would need to be especially sceptical of its authenticity. However, although he studied with the Pythagoreans when young, Aristoxenus was not regarded as a Pythagorean in the ancient tradition, in part, no doubt, because in his special field of expertise, music theory, he rejected Pythagorean teaching. Moreover, there is no evidence for any work being forged in his name nor is there any trace of an accusation that Aristoxenus himself forged any work. Thus the *Precepts* do not fit the pattern of the Pythagorean pseudepigrapha and should be regarded in the same way as any other

text handed down in the ancient tradition, i.e. we should start from the assumption that they are authentic. We should only reject what is assigned to the Pythagoreans in the *Precepts* if it is impossible or very improbable that such views could have been held by fourth-century Pythagoreans.

Does the standard view meet this criterion? The standard view of the *Precepts* is based on three main points: 1) there are noticeable similarities between the *Precepts* and texts in Plato and Aristotle, 2) these similarities involve some of Plato's and Aristotle's most distinctive doctrines and 3) similarities of this nature are best explained by supposing that Aristoxenus took these famous Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines and assigned them to the Pythagoreans in the *Precepts* in order to glorify the Pythagoreans at Plato's and Aristotle's expense. Each of these points is crucial to the standard view. Points 2 and 3 are particularly closely connected. If the similarities with Plato and Aristotle did not involve distinctive and important Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines, it would be hard to understand why Aristoxenus would have borrowed from Plato and Aristotle. No glory would be provided to the Pythagoreans by assigning them banal points also found in Plato and Aristotle. So for the standard view to work it is crucial that the similarities between the *Precepts* and Plato and Aristotle involve important and recognizable Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines.

The standard view is right in its first point that there are a number of similarities between the *Precepts* and passages in Plato and Aristotle. Indeed, the history of scholarship outlined above shows that from the beginning, even before the standard view was formulated, scholars had noted connections between the *Precepts* and Platonic and Peripatetic thought (Rohde 1871–2 = 1901: 162–3; Zeller 1919: 1.1.569). However, these similarities do not support the crucial conclusion of the standard view that Aristoxenus stole ideas from Plato and Aristotle and assigned them to the Pythagoreans, because they do not involve distinctive Platonic and Aristotelian doctrines. Close examination of them reveals the true nature of the similarities between Plato and Aristotle and the *Precepts* so it is important to look at some of them in detail. Consider fragment 1 (= Stobaeus 4.25.45):

From the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus: After what belongs to the gods and the divine [they thought it was necessary]

to pay most attention to parents and laws, not in a counterfeit way but conforming oneself to these things out of conviction. They approved abiding by the customs and laws of their fathers, even if they should be somewhat worse than those of others are.

According to the standard view the first supposed borrowing from Plato occurs when we are told that the Pythagoreans thought it was necessary, “after what belongs to the gods and the divine, to pay most attention to parents and laws.” Wehrli (1967: 59) duly cites several passages from Plato’s *Laws* (717a–b, 884a–885a, 930e), which agree that we should honor the gods first and then our parents (similarly Täger 1922: 27–36). Surely, however, that we should honor the gods, our parents and the laws must be one of the most widely held beliefs in fourth-century Greece, and there is absolutely no reason to suppose that Aristoxenus or the Pythagoreans derived it from these passages of the *Laws*. Indeed, Wehrli himself cites Xenophon’s *Memorabilia*, where fearing the gods and honoring one’s parents are identified as the two foremost examples of unwritten laws, which are observed in every country (4.19–20). Earlier, in the fifth century, Aeschylus mentions the necessity of honoring strangers, gods and parents in that order (*Suppl.* 698ff.). The closest parallel for the *Precepts* is Euripides fragment 853, which says “there are three virtues you should practice, child: to honor the gods, the parents who begot you and the common laws of Greece” (tr. Collard and Cropp in the Loeb, 2008). The *Precepts* and Plato are both expressing a widely held Greek belief, and there is no reason to suppose that either one derived the belief from the other.

The same fragment 1 goes on to assert that people should abide “by the customs and laws of their fathers, even if they should be somewhat worse than those of others are.” Wehrli claims that this shows an enmity to *καινοτομία* (“innovation”) that is Platonic (1967: 59–60). Both he and Rivaud (1932: 785) cite a number of passages in Plato where innovation in legislation is criticized and where extreme conservatism in maintaining traditional beliefs is praised. Thus, at *Laws* 634e it is suggested that none of the young be able to criticize the laws and that older men must not criticize the laws before the young but only before someone their own age or a magistrate. The Egyptians are praised for their conservatism regarding what postures may be portrayed in art (656d). Again, however, Plato and the *Pythagorean Precepts* are hardly unique in their

suspicions of legislative innovation. One only need think of the Spartan king Archidamus' comment in Book 1 of Thucydides that "we [Spartans] are not so highly educated as to look down upon our laws and customs" (1.84). Cleon's speech in the Mytilenian debate as presented by Thucydides is a closer parallel to what we find in the *Pythagorean Precepts* than anything in Plato. According to Cleon "a city will be stronger if it employs worse laws that are fixed than good laws that have no authority" (Thuc. 3.37.3). No one would want to assert presumably that the Pythagoreans derived their ethics from Cleon or that Cleon had been making secret visits to the local Pythagorean brotherhood. Plato, Cleon, Archidamus and the *Pythagorean Precepts* all share to varying degrees a widespread conservative notion that fixity of laws can in some cases be more important than correctness (for further examples see Dover 1974: 308). In his *Politics* (1268b26–8) Aristotle treats "the problem of whether it is harmful or beneficial for cities to change the laws handed down by their fathers, if some other law is better" and goes on to give a series of arguments for changing the laws and an equal number for not changing them. This passage shows the same thing as the passages quoted above, i.e. that the issue was broadly canvassed in the fourth century. It gives no indication that the conservative position was particularly Platonic. Indeed, one of the conservative arguments is similar to what is said in the *Precepts*, so Aristotle may be thinking of the Pythagoreans here (see the commentary on fr. 1) and Aristoxenus is probably accurately reflecting the views of fourth-century Pythagoreans (Camassa 1976–7). Certainly this is more plausible than supposing that Aristoxenus read through all of Aristotle's account and chose just one of the arguments to assign to the Pythagoreans (Täger 1922: 36–8). How would this glorify the Pythagoreans at Aristotle's expense, since Aristotle has not endorsed any of the arguments? There is once again no reason to suppose that Aristoxenus or the Pythagoreans derived this section of the *Precepts* from Plato or Aristotle.

According to the standard interpretation a third supposed borrowing appears in fragment 2 (= Stobaeus 4.1.49): "From the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus: As a general rule they thought it was necessary to suppose that there is no greater evil than anarchy, for it is not natural for human beings to be saved, if there is no one supervising them." Very much in agreement with what we have seen of fragment 1, fragment 2 asserts that "there is no greater evil than anarchy." Rivaud argues that

Plato too regarded anarchy as the greatest evil (1932: 786). He does not cite a specific passage, but he may have had in mind *Laws* 942d, where Plato asserts that ἀναρχία should be removed from the lives of all people. This passage is not, in fact, parallel to the assertion in the *Pythagorean Precepts*, since Plato makes clear that this assertion is not made about human life as a whole but is rather limited to life in the military (στρατειῶν δὲ ἔνεκα – 942a). Once again a much closer parallel to fragment 2 is to be found in a non-philosophic author, Sophocles. In the *Antigone*, Creon, using language that is almost identical to fragment 2, asserts in the face of Antigone's disobedience to his edict forbidding the burial of her brother Polyneices, that ἀναρχίας δὲ μείζον οὐκ ἔστιν κακόν ("There is no greater evil than anarchy" – line 672). The same statement appears in the sophist Antiphon (fr. 61 = Stob. 2.31.40). Surely we are not to suppose that Sophocles was a secret member of a Pythagorean society from which he derived the words ascribed to Creon. Nor should we suppose that Aristoxenus decided to construct a Pythagorean ethics by reading Sophocles. The idea that anarchy was the greatest or a very great evil in human life was shared by a large number of Greeks, and particularly by those of a conservative temperament, such as would have clapped loudly after Creon's speech in the *Antigone*. The precepts that 1) anarchy is the greatest of evils, 2) we should honor the gods first and then our parents and the laws and 3) that it is better to follow ancestral laws, even if they are somewhat worse than others, were widespread in the fifth and fourth centuries. Plato and the Pythagoreans could both adopt them for their own purposes, and we need not suppose that either derived these ideas from the other. The same is true of a number of other similarities between the *Precepts* and passages in Plato and Aristotle. Scholars have had blinders on and looked only at the similarity between the *Precepts* and Plato and Aristotle without stepping back to take a broader view and realizing that the views in question were widely held in conservative circles in the fourth century.

Do any of the other similarities between the *Precepts* and Plato and Aristotle establish the second principle of the standard view, i.e. do they involve Plato's and Aristotle's most distinctive doctrines, so that these philosophers' originality would be severely undercut if the views in question, in fact, originated with the Pythagoreans? It is most efficient to start by considering the arguments that are highlighted by the two recent scholars who devote some attention to the issue, Burkert and

Zhmud (although as noted above each author spends only about a page on the topic). Let us begin with Burkert and with the arguments of Rivaud that were most persuasive to him concerning the connection with Plato. Rivaud argued, and Burkert accepted, that the political precepts found in Aristoxenus' work "were surprisingly similar to those of Plato's *Republic*, though the predecessors of Plato named by Aristotle in this connection are Phaleas and Hippodamus and not the Pythagoreans" (Burkert 1972: 107–8). The argument has two parts: 1) there are striking similarities to distinctive political precepts put forth by Plato in the *Republic* and 2) we cannot suppose that those precepts originated with the Pythagoreans, because, although Aristotle does discuss the predecessors of Plato in establishing a state or polity, he says nothing of the Pythagoreans. This argument fails on both counts.

To begin with the second point first, both Rivaud and Burkert miss the fundamental fact that there is no evidence in the fragments of the *Precepts* that they offered a prescription for an ideal state or a blueprint of any sort for a constitution. There is no discussion of the founding of a state nor any reference to ideal legislators/rulers and how they would be chosen or how they would be trained. The education program outlined in the *Precepts* is not directed at a ruling class but is designed for all Pythagoreans. There is no reference to anything like Plato's division of the state into three classes (guardians, auxiliaries and craftsmen). The *Precepts* instead appear to be directed to Pythagoreans already living in existing Greek city-states. Since they do live in states, there needs to be advice on how they should respond to laws and rulers and how they should act if they chance to become rulers, but the advice is very limited and general. They should respect the laws and be slow to change them (fr. 1). If they become rulers they should try to be not only knowledgeable but also humane; as subjects they should not only obey but also love their rulers (fr. 2). Thus both ruler and ruled should willingly play their respective roles (fr. 10). That is the sum total of the political precepts to be found in the *Precepts*. Given that the *Precepts* are not at all directed at the founding of a state or establishing a constitution, there is no surprise whatsoever that Aristotle does not mention them as the predecessors to Plato in his discussion of constitutions in the *Politics*. At the end of Book 1 (1260b25) Aristotle announces that it is precisely the views that people have put forth about the ideal or best state (τῆς πολιτείας τῆς ἀρίστης) that he will discuss in Book 2. The first three sections of Book 2

are then devoted to a discussion of aspects of Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*. He then turns to predecessors of Plato, discussing the constitution proposed by Phaleas in section four and in section five that proposed by Hippodamus. The Pythagoreans are not included because the *Precepts* do not express any views about Aristotle's topic, the best state.

What about the first claim, that the *Precepts* show noticeable similarities to Plato's arrangements for the ideal state in the *Republic*? Rivaud has argued that the political doctrine of the *Pythagorean Precepts* at bottom "agrees entirely" with Plato's political doctrine in the *Republic*. This already seems implausible given what I have shown in the previous paragraph (i.e. that Pythagoreans were not trying to construct an ideal state) but it is worth examining what Rivaud has to say in some detail because his account exercised such influence on Burkert. Rivaud asserts that "Platonic communism is presented and justified in Book 5 of the *Republic* in just the same way as in the *Precepts*" and that "the plan of education in the *Republic* conforms in its general outline to that traced in the *Precepts*." He concludes that, if we regard the *Pythagorean Precepts* as representing pre-Platonic Pythagoreanism, we must conclude that Plato's account of such matters in the *Republic* has little originality (1932: 786–7). I confess to being almost totally at a loss to explain how Rivaud could argue that either Plato's account of the community of children and wives (his communism) or his rules governing the education of the guardians is essentially identical to what we find in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. I am equally puzzled as to how Burkert could cite Rivaud with approval and assert that the political doctrines of the *Precepts* "are surprisingly similar to those of Plato's *Republic*" (1972: 107). Rivaud's manner of presentation makes it difficult to evaluate his argument, since he summarizes what he takes to be the position of the *Precepts* on education and marriage/sex but provides not a single reference to indicate the specific text of the *Precepts* on which he is relying for his summary (1932: last paragraph 785–first paragraph 786). Rivaud appears to base his case for the connection to Platonic communism on fragment 4 (= Stobaeus 4.37.4):

From the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus: Concerning generation of children they said the following. As a general rule, <they thought that it was necessary> to guard against what is called "precocious," for neither in the case of plants nor of

animals does the precocious bear good fruit, but they need to be prepared in advance of bearing fruit for some time, in which time their bodies, having gained full strength and having reached maturity, become able to provide both seeds and fruits. There are many things in life in which late-learning is better, as is the case also with the business of engaging in sex. It is necessary, then, that they be brought up so busy with training while still children, that not only do they not seek, but, if possible, that they not even know of such intercourse until they are twenty. Whenever the children have reached even this age, they must rarely engage in sex. For this contributes considerably to the good condition both of those that are begetting and of those who are going to be begotten. They said also that one should not associate with women for reproduction when full of food and strong drink. For they did not think that from a temperament that is base and discordant and disordered well-proportioned and beautiful things arise, but things that are not at all good.

Four basic theses concerning procreation and sex are assigned to the Pythagoreans in the fragment: 1) the precocious should be avoided in all things, 2) we should not even learn about sex until relatively late in life, that is, age twenty, 3) even after the age of twenty one should only engage in sex rarely and 4) the manner in which intercourse is carried out influences the nature of the offspring so that, if we want beautiful and well-proportioned offspring, intercourse should also be orderly and harmonious. Thus we should not have sex when we are in the disordered states associated with drunkenness or overeating. In sections 212–13 of Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (the parallel passage to fr. 4 in Iamblichus, see fr. 9) the point is made that while dog-lovers and bird-fanciers pay very close attention to the breeding of those animals, "human beings pay no attention to their own offspring but procreate without plan and haphazardly." They urged those begetting children "to give great forethought for their future offspring." Finally in section 210, the Pythagoreans are said to have praised common Greek customs prohibiting incest or having sex in a public place. Immediately after this, they are said to believe it "necessary to strip away both engenderings that are contrary to nature and also those that arise by violence or excess." In the context, this clearly means that the Pythagoreans

approved of abortion in the cases of incest and rape (see the commentary on fr. 9, lines 146–7).

It is undoubtedly the case that Plato would agree, at least in spirit, with these basic points. Once again, however, it is not just the Pythagoreans and Plato that agree on such points. There is a long tradition in Greek thought about the generation of children which focuses on the condition of the parents and the specific circumstances under which they unite to produce children (for more on this tradition see the commentary on section 6 of fr. 9). Hesiod specifies that the man should be around thirty years of age and the woman in the fifth year after puberty when they marry (*Works and Days* 694–8). Euripides emphasizes the influence of the activities of the parents on the nature of the offspring: “the children of a father and mother who toil at strenuous activities are better” (*Meleager* fr. 525). By the end of the fifth century, treatments of the generation of children self-consciously begin with a discussion of the nature of parents. Thus, Critias asserts, “I begin you see from the generation of a man. How would he come to have the best and strongest body? If the one begetting him exercises, eats in a hardy way and subjects his body to hard work and the mother of the child is to be strong in body and exercise” (fr. 32 DK). The importance of the nature and activities of the parents for the resulting offspring also had a long history at Sparta and must have gone back even before the fifth century. Writing in the fourth century Xenophon emphasizes the Spartan belief that in order for the best children to be produced the parents had to be in the best possible state, so that they instituted physical training for both young men and women. They insisted that marriages only occur when parents were in their prime (*Lac.* 1.4–6). Although writing much later, Plutarch reflects this early Spartan attitude when he reports that at Sparta Lycurgus began his concern for education by overseeing marriages and the generation of children (*Lycurgus* 14.1). Xenophon also presents Socrates as arguing that the natural law against incest is based on the principle that parents should be at their prime when procreating, which neither the parent nor the child would be in cases of incest (*Memorabilia* 4.4.19–23). Plato and Aristotle will also adopt this approach. In the *Politics* Aristotle explicitly says that the lawgiver in his concern for the children produced in the state will pay attention to the union of the sexes and specifically to the age and condition of the parents (1334b29–34). Earlier, in the *Republic*, Plato famously discusses the age and condition of parents that come together

to produce the future guardians for his state (458e–461e). Thus, when the discussion of the generation of children in the *Pythagorean Precepts* focuses on the age of the parents and the condition of their bodies and emphasizes that the parents should approach procreation in a conscious and thoughtful way, there is no reason to suppose that this was inspired by Plato or Aristotle. The *Precepts*, like Plato and Aristotle, are following what can be described as one of the standard approaches to the topic of the generation of children in the late fifth and fourth centuries.

Plato and the *Precepts* agree on two specific points which have been highlighted by proponents of the standard view but which once again turn out to be shared with other fifth- and fourth-century authors (for more detailed discussion of these two points see the commentary on section 6 of fr. 9). First, some scholars point out that Plato (*Leg.* 755b), like the *Precepts*, explicitly says that parents should not be drunk but fully sober when trying to procreate children (Täger 1922: 56–7; cf. Rohde 1871–2 = 1901: 162). Given the general concern about the condition of the parents outlined in the tradition above, one might *a priori* suppose that Plato and the Pythagoreans were not the only ones to think that parents should not be drunk when having sex. This is confirmed by passages in the Hippocratic corpus that date to the late fifth or early fourth century (Jouanna 1999: 385–6; Craik 2015: 206). Thus the author of *On Diseases of Women* 3 (*On Barrenness*) says of the man about to engage in sex “let him be sober . . . and well-nourished on a small amount of appropriate food” (8, cf. 6). Plutarch in the first century AD says that men should either drink not at all or very moderately before approaching their wives in order to procreate (*The Education of Children* 3). He assigns this view to his predecessors in general and gives no indication that it was a particularly Platonic view. He in fact reports a story of Diogenes the Cynic in order to illustrate the principle.

Second, proponents of the standard view (Rivaud 1932: 786; Täger 1922: 57) as well as other scholars (Rohde 1871–2 = 1901: 162) have emphasized that at *Republic* 458e Plato, just like the *Precepts*, makes the comparison between procreation of human beings and the breeding of dogs and birds. However, the comparison between the breeding of animals and the procreation of human beings again has a long history in Greek thought going back to the sixth century (as Rohde himself notes, 1871–2 = 1901: 162, n.2). In the *Elegies* (183–92), Theognis, the true aristocrat lamenting the depravity of his day, makes his point in a

way that is very similar to the *Precepts*: “We seek out rams and asses that are purebred, Cynus, and everyone wishes that they mount (females) of good stock; but the noble man does not mind marrying the base daughter of a base father if the latter gives him a lot of money.” As in the *Precepts* and Plato, the complaint is that we take more care about how our animals procreate than how we do. Thus, there is no reason to think that Aristoxenus stole these two points from Plato and included them in the *Precepts* to glorify the Pythagoreans. The Greek reader would surely not have recognized them as something distinctly Platonic or particularly revolutionary. In each case the Pythagoreans and Plato are simply adopting a conservative view that was found elsewhere in the late fifth and early fourth centuries in one case, and that went back to the sixth century in the other.

It is clear then that Plato and the *Precepts* share with each other and with a broad tradition some general attitudes which promote orderly sex and procreation; the question is whether those ideas are developed in “just the same way” to use Rivaud’s language, in Plato and the *Precepts* or are “surprisingly similar” to use Burkert’s. Are there similarities such that we can only suppose one to be dependent on the other? It is when we turn to the distinctive features of Plato’s account of generation of children and the relations between the sexes that Rivaud’s and Burkert’s prominent similarities and exact correspondences are hardest to understand. As Rivaud emphasizes, Plato gives us all sorts of signs in *Republic* 5 that he regards the views that he is presenting about the role of women in his state and about the generation and rearing of children as radical innovations. What are these innovations? First and foremost, women and children should be held in common (449c), and no parent should know his or her offspring nor any child its parent (457d). Second, women have the same capabilities as men and should therefore receive the same education and engage in the same pursuits, in accordance with their particular natures (451e, 455d). Third, the guardians should arrange things so that the best of the male and the best of the female guardians have the most children and with each other (459d). Fourth, the guardians should develop noble fictions in order to bring this about (460a, 459c–d). Fifth, the community of wives and children is justified by an appeal to the importance of unity in the state: the state in which the greatest number of people use “mine” and “not mine” in the same way will be the most unified and best (462c).

This is a long list of very original and controversial doctrines. That these are the distinctive features of Plato's proposal is shown by Aristotle who focuses on just these features of the *Republic* in his critique of Plato in the first two chapters of Book 2 of the *Politics*. If we found these doctrines in the *Pythagorean Precepts*, we would indeed have to suppose either that Plato had stolen them from the Pythagoreans or that the *Pythagorean Precepts* had been written by someone who had read the *Republic*. There is no need to start down this path of thought, however, since not a single one of these doctrines appears in the *Precepts*. In particular, I return in puzzlement to Rivaud's assertion that "Platonic communism is presented and justified in Book 5 of the *Republic* in just the same way as in the *Precepts*" (1932: 787). There is absolutely no mention of the community of wives and children in the *Precepts* nor of the argument that such community is necessary to produce maximum unity in the state. Similarly the terms that are central to the Pythagorean account of procreation and sex, the precocious (προφερός) and late-learning (ὀψιμαθία) do not appear in Plato. Rivaud focused on the *Republic*, but if we examine the passages on marriage and sex in Plato's *Laws* and indeed in Aristotle's *Politics* (not mentioned by Rivaud) the result is the same: none of Plato's or Aristotle's distinctive ideas on these topics are found in the *Precepts* (see the commentary on section 6 of fr. 9 for detailed discussion of the *Laws* and *Politics*).

Rivaud's claim that the general outlines of Platonic education in the *Republic* are the same as the program of education in the *Pythagorean Precepts* fares no better. The greater part of fragment 2 is devoted to distinguishing four periods in human life and assigning appropriate activities to each period:

They thought that it was necessary to show concern for every age group, that children be given practice in letters and the other subjects, that young men be trained in the customs and laws of the city, and that men should devote themselves to actions and service on behalf of the public. The old men, they supposed, should be engaged in reflection, courts and giving council with all of their knowledge, so that neither would children act like infants, nor young men act like children, nor men act like young men, nor old men become senile. They said that it was necessary, right from childhood, even to have a diet that is well-ordered,

teaching that order and due proportion are fine and advantageous, but disorder and lack of due proportion are shameful and disadvantageous.

Children are supposed to practice reading and writing (γράμματα) as well as other subjects (τοῖς ἄλλοις μαθήμασιν, perhaps gymnastics, music and drawing, compare Arist. *Pol.* 1337b24). Young men are to be trained in the laws and customs of the city. Men are to give their attention to actions and services on behalf of the public (δημοσίαις λειτουργίαις). Finally, old men, on the basis of all their knowledge, should be engaged in reflection and serve as judges and councilors. Wehrli suggested that the *Precepts* were similar to Plato in using the age groups for educational purposes and in suggesting that education should continue beyond childhood (1967: 60). However, this is true only to a very limited extent. It is important to note that the Pythagorean system described above is not strictly a system of education but rather a division of proper activities between the four groups. The proper activities for the first two groups (up to age forty – see the commentary on fr. 2) do involve educational activities (although for the second group this involves just learning the customs and laws of the state), but this is not true for the third group and only to a limited degree for the fourth (old men do engage in reflection).

There is an undoubted similarity between the *Republic* and fragment 2 of the *Precepts* in that both divide human life into distinct periods with distinct tasks, and both clearly think that it is an orderly education and way of life that is fine and advantageous and that a disorderly life and education leads to ruin. These points of view are again not limited to the *Republic* and the *Precepts*, however. The idea that human life is divided into distinct periods with distinct activities can be found already in the sixth century with Solon, who divides human life into ten seven-year periods (fr. 27). The Spartans structured their life and education according to a very rigorous set of age groups (Plutarch, *Lyc.* 14–18; Xenophon, *Lac.* 2.1–4.7; *Hell.* 5.32). In his *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon constructs his own set of four age groups for the Persians (1.4–15). Athenian education, as described by Protagoras in Plato's dialogue of the same name, teaches and corrects the young starting from earliest childhood (325c) and is divided into three phases. The first occurs at home under the guidance of nurse and parents. The second begins when the child is sent off to teachers of letters, harp-playing and physical training. After this

schooling, in the third phase, the city “requires that they learn the laws and live according to them” (326c), just as the *Pythagorean Precepts* require that “young men should be trained in the customs and laws of the city.” Thus, the mere use of age groups and praise for order in upbringing is not enough to establish a compelling connection between the *Precepts* and the *Republic*. These traits are common to a number of texts and educational practices from the fourth century and earlier (for more detailed discussion of age groups in the Greek tradition see the commentary on fr. 2).

Is there any more specific similarity between the *Republic* and the *Precepts*, which could lead us to accept Rivaud’s view that the plan of education in the two works is so similar that, if we accept the *Pythagorean Precepts* as antedating Plato, Plato’s originality is seriously in doubt? To this question we must surely answer no. What are the notable features of the age groups that Plato distinguishes in the *Republic*? Wehrli correctly refers to *Republic* 536a–541b as the central text (1967: 60). Plato has earlier identified the years up to age twenty as devoted to the study of music and gymnastics and specifically marks the last two or three years of this period as devoted to strenuous physical training, which makes the young unfit for intellectual occupations (537b). The next ten years are given over to the study of mathematics at the highest level; these are the five propaedeutic studies outlined in the immediately preceding section of the *Republic*: calculation, geometry, stereometry, astronomy and harmonics (537c–d). For the next five years the future guardians engage in the highest of studies, dialectic (539e). Then, from age thirty-five to age fifty the guardians will return to the cave and hold command in war and other offices in the state, so that they will have practical experience (539e–540a). After age fifty they will devote their life to the study of philosophy while also taking their turn in ruling the state (540b). None of the distinctive features of this Platonic system of education is found in the *Precepts*. There is no mention of ten years devoted to mathematics from the ages of twenty to thirty. Indeed there is no mention at all of Plato’s carefully defined five propaedeutic studies nor of his account of why and how they should be studied. Nor is there any distinction made between the sensible and intelligible world, between the cave and the real world outside the cave, the distinction that is the foundation of Plato’s whole educational program. Similarly, there is no mention of the highest of Platonic studies, dialectic. There is no more similarity between the *Pythagorean Precepts* and Plato

on the age groups and the education appropriate to each of them than between Plato and the Spartan system of education. If we suppose that the *Precepts* antedate Plato, there is not the slightest reason to doubt the startling originality of Plato's educational system; nothing in the *Precepts'* account of the age groups suggests that they were derived from Plato (for further discussion of the age groups in the *Republic* as well as discussion of age groups in Plato's *Laws* and in Aristotle see the commentary on fr. 2).

Burkert's second main point in support of the standard view focused on similarities between the *Precepts* and Aristotle. In doing so he added some of his own insights to those already provided by Wehrli (1967: 62) and Täger (1922: 64–8). Burkert asserts that the Pythagorean account of luck presented in fragment 7 of the *Precepts* is not Pythagorean at all and is, in fact, derived from Aristotle's ethics (1972: 108). He provides two arguments for this assertion. First, he maintains that Aristotle says that “none of ‘the ancients’ had dealt with the nature of Τύχη,” and he takes this to indicate that Aristotle knew of no Pythagorean account of luck. Second, he argues that what Aristoxenus presents as the Pythagorean account of luck in the *Precepts* is “precisely what the *Eudemian Ethics* expounds as τύχη.” Wehrli (1967: 62) compared fragment 7 not to the *Eudemian Ethics* but to a passage in the *Magna Moralia* (1206b30–1207b19), but the passages are very similar and the differences do not affect the argument. Burkert's first point is presumably made in light of Aristotle's typical practice of canvassing the views of his predecessors on any topic that he is exploring. If Aristotle, in developing his own account of luck, reports that none of his predecessors had dealt with the topic in detail, it is unlikely that any such account existed before Aristotle, since Aristotle had good access to the work of his predecessors and had actively sought for earlier accounts of the concept of luck. Therefore, the argument goes, it is unlikely that there was a Pythagorean account of luck prior to Aristotle.

It is not, in fact, clear that Aristotle is saying what Burkert says he is. It is important to note first, that Aristotle's remarks about the lack of treatment of the subject of luck by his predecessors comes not from his discussion of luck in the *Eudemian Ethics*, the discussion to which Burkert compares the Pythagorean account of luck, but rather from the *Physics*. In *Physics* 2.4, Aristotle is considering whether and in what sense luck is a cause. Towards the beginning of that discussion, he says that, if there were really such a thing as luck, one might wonder why “none of

the philosophers of old determined its nature at all” (οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀρχαίων σοφῶν . . . περὶ τύχης οὐδὲν διώρισεν). Unfortunately, to quote the passage as I have just done, while showing the basis for Burkert’s point, is quite misleading. When the passage is quoted in full, Burkert’s point loses much of its force. To the assertion that “none of the philosophers of old determined its nature at all” Aristotle adds the important qualifying phrase “when speaking of the causes concerning generation and destruction” (196a10). This qualification makes it clear that Aristotle is thinking here of the early Greek cosmologists, whom he typically calls the *physiologoi*. This conclusion is confirmed when he goes on to argue a few lines later that these early philosophers did not identify luck with the causes they recognized, since he gives as examples of those causes Empedocles’ Love and Strife, Anaxagoras’ Mind and Heraclitus’ Fire (196a17–19). Aristotle’s assertion in the *Physics*, then, is that none of the early Greek cosmologists of the sixth and fifth centuries provided a discussion of luck, when they discussed the causes of coming to be and passing away. Aristotle could perfectly well make such an assertion while at the same time knowing that the Pythagoreans of a later time, that is, the fourth century, did discuss luck in an ethical context. Moreover, in ethics, as opposed to his practice in physics, Aristotle makes very few specific references to predecessors, so his failure to mention the Pythagoreans in ethical contexts is not surprising. In his account of luck in the *Eudemian Ethics* Aristotle makes no reference to any specific predecessors, although this does not mean that he does not know of other views of luck; he frequently refers to views about luck that are held by an unidentified “they” (1247a9 οἷονταί; 1247a24, φασίν; 1247b7, τιθέασιν). As I will show below, one of the reports of what “they say” matches the Pythagorean view of luck in the *Precepts*, so that Aristotle probably does refer to them but not by name.

Burkert’s more substantive point, as noted above, is that the account of luck in the *Precepts* is “precisely what the *Eudemian Ethics* expounds as τύχη.” This point fares no better. As Mills first noted in 1982, there are significant differences between Aristotle’s account in the *Eudemian Ethics* and the account in the *Precepts*. Here is the account of luck in fragment 7 of the *Precepts*:

Concerning luck they said the following: A part of it is divine, for some inspiration arises from the divine for some people, either

for the better or for the worse, and it is clearly in accordance with precisely this that some are lucky and some are unlucky. This is most clearly seen when those who do something with no prior consideration and without plan are often successful, while those who do something after planning in advance and taking correct precautions fail. But there is also another kind of luck, in accordance with which some people are born gifted and with the ability to hit the mark, but others are born dull and with the opposite nature. Of these the ones hit whatever mark they aim at, but the others fail to obtain their object, since their thought is never borne toward the target but is always confused. This bad luck is inborn and not imposed from outside.

Here the Pythagoreans make a distinction between two types of luck. The first sort of luck is assigned a divine origin. This kind of luck can be seen most clearly where people have success or failure contrary to what we would expect based on their behavior. It is seen either when someone who has done no prior planning and who acts at random none the less succeeds or, conversely, when someone who has planned in advance and who has taken all the correct precautions still fails. In such cases the Pythagoreans concluded that there must have been some inspiration arising from the gods, which led to the better or worse result, in defiance of the efforts of the individuals involved. This sort of luck is imposed from outside (ἐπείσασκτον) by the divine. The second sort of luck is not initially named, but, in the last line of the fragment, is described as arising from our nature (σύμφυτον) in contrast to the first sort of luck, which was contrary to our nature and imposed from outside. The second sort of luck leads some people to be born with genius and the ability to hit the mark, while others are born dull and unable to hit the mark. This sort of luck is similar to a genetic endowment, which allows some people to see clearly how to achieve their ends, while others remain muddled as to what to do.

Aristotle's account of luck in *Eudemian Ethics* 8.2 has been the source of considerable controversy (e.g., Kenny 1992; Johnson 1997; White 1992), but those controversies do not keep us from seeing the radical differences between Aristotle's account and the account of the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Superficially Aristotle's account is similar in so far as it recognizes one sort of good fortune that is associated with the

divine and another sort that is not (*EE* 1248b4), and it is to this similarity that Burkert is presumably referring. As soon as we examine the details of the two accounts, however, it becomes clear that what the Pythagoreans meant by divine luck is quite different, indeed the opposite of what Aristotle meant. As we have seen above, the crucial characteristic of divine luck for the Pythagoreans is that it is imposed from outside. The gods conceive of a purpose for an individual and inspire them to accomplish that purpose despite the fact that the individual has not done the appropriate prior planning. Aristotle, on the other hand, says that, in the case of divine good fortune, the fortunate person is fortunate because of his impulse (1248b4–5), that is, he is lucky not despite his actions but because of them. Aristotle ascribes such irrational impulses that produce good results to the favor of the divine (1248b4). Aristotle's divine luck is in accord with the natural impulse of the individual and is thus more similar to the second sort of Pythagorean luck, which is described as inborn (Mills 1982: 207).

At 1247a24 Aristotle discusses and explicitly rejects the Pythagorean sort of divine luck (Mills 1982: 206). He raises the question of whether a person is lucky because god loves him. He explicitly says that on this view, luck is something from outside. We have seen that the Pythagoreans emphasized precisely that divine luck was not inborn but imposed from outside. Aristotle criticizes this view for making god love someone who has planned badly and not taken all the correct precautions, to use the language of the *Precepts*. Aristotle objects “it is absurd that god or the divine should love a person of this sort and not the best and most prudent person” (1247a29). For Aristotle the person who succeeds or fails contrary to their impulse or their choice is precisely not the person whom the divine has aided, for the divine should reward good choices and not bad ones. This sort of luck is, in fact, Aristotle's second sort of luck, which he explicitly contrasts to divine luck and describes as “contrary to . . . impulse” (1248b5–6). It appears then that the Pythagoreans' two sorts of luck and Aristotle's two sorts of good fortune, while bearing similar names, are in many ways opposite in content. What the Pythagoreans call divine luck, which is imposed from outside, is Aristotle's second sort of good fortune, the sort of good fortune which he describes as contrary to our impulse. What the Pythagoreans call inborn luck is what Aristotle means by divine good fortune, good fortune that is in accordance with our impulse.

It appears then that the superficial similarity between fragment 7 and the *Eudemian Ethics* in proposing a distinction between divine luck and another sort of luck is just that, a superficial similarity. Both do share the idea that one sort of luck is divine, but that is not very remarkable. Given the extensive intervention of the gods in human life in Greek literature and religion, it would be surprising if any ancient Greek account of luck did not at least consider the possibility that luck was connected to the gods. In addition to the lack of similarity in their basic conceptions of luck it can be demonstrated that the terminology and concepts used to discuss luck in the two accounts show almost no overlap (see the commentary on fr. 7). The account of luck in the *Precepts* is precisely not what the *Eudemian Ethics* propounds as τύχη. There is, in short, no reason to suppose that fragment 7 of the *Precepts* is in any way derived from Aristotle's account of luck in the *Eudemian Ethics*.

On the other hand, if we examine Aristotle's discussion of good fortune in *Eudemian Ethics* 8.2, there is at least a suggestion that he was familiar with the Pythagorean account of luck on which Aristoxenus drew when he wrote the *Pythagorean Precepts*. The first view of good fortune that Aristotle discusses is ascribed to an undefined "they" who think (οἶονται) that some are lucky by nature (φύσει). According to this view "nature makes some people such [that is, lucky or unlucky], and they differ right from birth; just as some people are blue-eyed and some black-eyed . . . so some are lucky and some are unlucky" (1247a9–12). This sounds very much like the second type of luck in the *Precepts*, which is described as "tied to our nature" or "inborn" (σύμφυτον) and according to which some people grow up with natural talent (εὐφυεῖς) and others without natural talent (ἀφυεῖς). The next view of good fortune presented by Aristotle, on the other hand, is very close to the first type of luck defined by the Pythagoreans, their divine luck. Once again Aristotle ascribes this view to a vague "they": "is it the case that [someone is lucky] by being loved, as they say, by god, and success is something from outside" (1247a23–4). As we have seen, Aristotle rejects this view but his description of it as "from outside" matches the Pythagorean view very well. Since Aristotle uses the vague "they" to introduce both of these accounts of luck, he may think that these are just common views that are not distinctive enough to be assigned to any particular thinker. On the other hand, since the two types of luck he discusses are precisely the two types that the Pythagoreans identify, it is not impossible that the

Pythagorean discussion is at least one source on which he is drawing. The appearance of these two types of luck in Aristotle's account is no reason to suspect that Aristoxenus is deriving his account of Pythagorean views on luck from Aristotle. After all, Aristotle presents these views explicitly as views held by others and views of which he is critical. What motivation would Aristoxenus have for assigning these views to the Pythagoreans, other than that they were, in fact, Pythagorean views? The most reasonable explanation of the evidence is that Aristotle is reporting views on luck held by his contemporaries and predecessors and that it is accordingly no surprise that Aristoxenus' account of the view of luck held by the fourth-century Pythagoreans should show similarities to what Aristotle reports about his predecessors. Thus, Burkert's defense of the standard interpretation fails. Does Zhmud do any better?

Zhmud follows the standard view in stating that "the Pythagorean stratum in the *Precepts* cannot always be confidently separated from the theories of the Academy and the Lyceum," and he cites Wehrli and Burkert with approval (2012a: 65, n.17). However, he has nothing specific to say about similarities between the Lyceum and the *Precepts* and instead develops two points to show that the *Precepts* put distinctively Platonic points into the mouths of the Pythagoreans. First, he notes that in fragment 6 the Pythagoreans assert "that all learning . . . that was willing was both correct and also attained its end, but when unwilling was both inferior and did not attain its end." In fragment 10, lines 52–3 the same point is made but in an amplified form repeating that "learning that arises correctly come[s] to be willingly" but adding, "when both wish it, the teacher and the learner. For if ever either one of those mentioned resists, the appointed task would not duly reach its end." Zhmud says then that "this reminds us unmistakably of Plato's socio-pedagogical principle: 'Nothing that is learned under compulsion stays with the mind' (*Resp.* 536d–e)." He is certainly right that the two ideas are similar (Wehrli had noted some similarity on this point earlier, 1967: 60), but this is not enough to show that the most reasonable explanation of the presence of the idea in the *Precepts* is that Aristoxenus derived it from the *Republic* and assigned it to the Pythagoreans. There are several problems with the latter suggestion. First, if Aristoxenus derived the idea from the *Republic* and wanted us to see that the Pythagoreans had anticipated Plato on this point we would expect at least some similarity in the language and in the development of the idea. As Zhmud notes, Plato goes on to argue that

education should involve play in order to make the citizens follow the laws willingly (*Resp.* 537a; cf. *Leg.* 819b–c). There is no trace of this idea in the *Precepts*. More importantly the *Precepts* do not use Plato’s language in making the basic point (e.g., there is no mention of compulsion or use of the language of freedom and slavery as in Plato). The difference in language between the *Precepts* and Plato is demonstrated more extensively in the commentary on fragment 6.

The lack of any significant similarity of the language of the two passages suggests a more likely explanation for the similarity in basic idea between them. As we have seen in other cases, both Plato and the Pythagoreans develop similar ideas that were present in fourth-century thought and earlier. Indeed, it is *a priori* likely that anyone either in the modern or ancient world who considers education will naturally ask whether students should be compelled or cajoled to learn. Zhmud himself has noted that the *Precepts* are often close to traditional wisdom (2012a: 156, n. 77). The argument that teaching should not involve compulsion is probably a specific instance of a more general principle that was a widely held piece of traditional wisdom. Thus, the sixth-century poet, Theognis, reminds us “everything compulsory is grievous” (472; cf. Plato, *Phdr.* 240c). Aristotle quotes this proverbial wisdom in three places, although he ascribes it to the poet Evenus rather than Theognis (*Metaph.* 1015a30, *Rhet.* 1370a10 and *EE* 1223a31). It is important to remember that we have clear evidence that the Pythagoreans had a distinctive way of life in the fourth century and that Aristoxenus had close connection to these Pythagoreans. The *Pythagorean Precepts* are the only primary evidence we have for this way of life so that we should only dismiss what is said in them if there is serious doubt that what is ascribed to the Pythagoreans in them was a possible view for fourth-century Pythagoreans. But surely there is nothing impossible or, indeed, improbable in supposing that the Pythagoreans, independently of Plato, thought that learning should be willing. The proverbial tradition outlined above clearly implies the idea and it is a natural idea to be developed by anyone concerned with education. Moreover, although Plato does advocate a similar idea it is hardly an idea so central to Platonic thought and so remarkable that Aristoxenus could hope that the Pythagoreans would gain much glory by assigning it to them. Surely it is much more plausible that they came up with a similar idea independently of Plato. Plato might then have encountered the idea among the

Pythagoreans, but it is equally likely that he developed it on his own or derived it from a broader tradition. Whatever the case might be, Plato's originality in the field of education is secured by the multitude of innovative educational ideas in both the *Republic* (e.g., the curriculum for the guardians put forth in *Republic* 7) and *Laws*, which Aristoxenus oddly overlooks if his goal was to steal from Plato for the glory of the Pythagoreans.

Zhmud's other point (a development of a point made by Wehrli 1967: 62) concerns fragment 5. Fragment 5 asserts that true love of what is beautiful and fine (φιλοκαλία) is found in our pursuits and in the sciences (ἐν τοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασι καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἐπιστήμασι) rather than in things that are necessary and useful for life, which the many regard as the beautiful and fine. Zhmud argues that this is Platonic since "the necessary and useful occupy the lowest position in Plato's hierarchy of activities" and not Pythagorean since "Archytas praised the practical utility of mathematics" in fragment 3 (2012a: 65, n. 17). He is surely right about Plato's hierarchy of value and that Archytas does value the practical utility of mathematics in fragment 3. But it does not follow from these points that the account of φιλοκαλία in fragment 5 is not Pythagorean and was derived from Plato by Aristoxenus and assigned to the Pythagoreans. Zhmud does not refer to any specific passages in Plato to support his point but Wehrli points to *Laws* 697. In that passage Plato ranks the goods of the soul highest, followed by goods of the body, and last goods of property. Wehrli also mentions the common Aristotelian distinction between external goods, goods of the body and goods of the soul (e.g., *EN* 1098b12). Fragment 5 of the *Precepts* is not particularly close to either of these passages, since, while it does seem to have a similar scale of value, it does not make anything like these explicit distinctions between kinds of goods, which we might have expected if it were based on either Plato or Aristotle. In fact, a closer parallel to fragment 5 is found in a passage not mentioned by either Wehrli or Zhmud, Plato's *Symposium* 210a ff. where Diotima describes an ascent from love of beautiful bodies to beautiful practices and then to the beauties of knowledge, using the same two words found in fragment 5 (210c – μετὰ δὲ τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα ἐπὶ τὰς ἐπιστήμας ἀγαγεῖν). This passage makes clear what the passages cited by Wehrli and Zhmud do not, i.e. that both Plato and the Pythagoreans explicitly valued the beauty of practices and knowledge above material beauties.

However, when we turn to the details it becomes clear that it is totally unnecessary to appeal to the supposition that Aristoxenus raided Plato and Aristotle in order to explain the similarity. Most importantly, the concept of the person who is φιλόκαλος, a lover of what is fine, exists in fourth-century thought outside of and independent of Plato and Aristotle. The adjective, in fact, only appears twice in Plato and six times in Aristotle, so it is not a key term for either of them (the noun first appears in the *Precepts*; for more details see the commentary on fr. 5). Uses of the adjective in Isocrates and Xenophon show what fragment 5 implies, that it usually referred to the love of fine material goods. Thus, Xenophon describes a soldier as *philokalon* about his equipment (*Cyr.* 2.1.22) and Isocrates someone who is *philokalos* about his dress (*Dem.* 27). In both cases the term is positive and suggests that the person in question can really appreciate a fine weapon or tasteful finery in dress without pursuing what is gaudy or excessive. Of course, the most famous use of the related verb is in Pericles' funeral oration as presented by Thucydides (2.40) where the Athenians "love what is beautiful and fine (φιλοκαλοῦμεν) but do so without excessive expense." Here too the reference is likely to be to material things, i.e. to the tasteful adornment of Athens with architecture and art, although some of Pericles' opponents might have contested how tasteful it was and whether it could really be described as not excessive in expense (Gomme 1956: 2.119–21). This common conception of the love of the beautiful and fine makes excellent sense as what the Pythagoreans are distancing themselves from in fragment 5; clothes, weapons and buildings are things necessary for life, which the many value. This stance against excessive concern with material goods also fits very well with the attack on excessive desires in fragment 9 of the *Precepts*, where the Pythagoreans attack the desire for "superfluous food or superfluous and luxurious clothing and bedding or superfluous, costly and elaborate housing" as well as "dining services and drinking cups" (lines 85–9). Certainly there would be no inconsistency in Archytas' valuing the practical utility of mathematics in establishing justice and avoiding conflicts between the rich and the poor in fragment 3 and agreeing wholeheartedly with fragment 5's attack on the many's focus on obtaining the finest housing and clothes. Fragment 5 is not an attack on practicality but on excessive concern for material goods. As Plato himself indicates in the *Republic*, fifth- and fourth-century Pythagoreans were

above all famous for their way of life, for their pursuits, so it is no surprise that these pursuits are valued as they are in fragment 5. Thus, we can make perfect sense of fragment 5 in the context of the fifth- and fourth-century values revealed in Xenophon, Isocrates and Thucydides without any appeal to Plato or Aristotle.

It is thus clear that while the Pythagoreans agree with Plato and Aristotle in putting a higher value on pursuits and knowledge than material goods, there is nothing impossible or improbable in supposing that they developed this idea on their own in the late fifth and early fourth-century context described above. As in other cases they may be developing a piece of traditional wisdom that goes back even further, since a saying attributed to Thales as one of the seven wise men refers to beautiful pursuits just as fragment 5 does: “don’t make your face beautiful but be beautiful in your pursuits” (μὴ τὴν ὄψιν καλλωπίζου, ἀλλ’ ἐν τοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασιν ἴσθι καλός – DK 1.64.2–3). This saying, like the sayings of the other members of the seven wise men, is part of a general wisdom tradition and we have no way of knowing whether it, in fact, goes back to Thales. However, the sentiment and its formulation are perfectly plausible for a sixth-century thinker. This devaluation of material goods may be one aspect of the Pythagorean way of life that stirred Plato’s admiration in the *Republic*. As in other cases described above, Plato’s treatment of the subject is far more developed than anything found in fragment 5, and Plato’s reputation will not be influenced a whit if we assume that the Pythagoreans had developed the views in fragment 5 before he wrote the *Symposium* and *Republic*, although, as noted above, it may help to explain why Plato admired the Pythagorean way of life. Certainly there is no trace of the distinctively Platonic conceptions of the form of the beautiful as the ultimate object of love or of the progression from the love of the particular to the love of the universal, which are hallmarks of his account of what is the highest love in the *Symposium* (for a more detailed discussion of the language used in Plato, Aristotle and the *Precepts* concerning *philokalia* see the detailed commentary on fragment 5).

Thus the two texts highlighted by Zhmud provide no compelling reason to make us suppose that they originated in Aristoxenus’ reading of Plato rather than among the Pythagoreans themselves. It is hard to see why Aristoxenus would have felt compelled to take these not particularly prominent Platonic views, views that were shared by other Greeks in the

fourth century and earlier, carefully change the language and then insert them into his account of the Pythagoreans of the day. It neither takes any significant glory away from Plato nor adds it to the Pythagoreans. Surely it is much more reasonable to assume that the views in question were what he was, in fact, told by the Pythagoreans with whom he associated.

At this point we have seen that the arguments for the standard interpretation by the only two scholars to defend and develop it in the last forty years are fatally flawed. Burkert and Zhmud rely on the earlier arguments of Rivaud and Wehrli, so many of those arguments too have been undercut. The review above has, in fact, considered all the major points made by Rivaud, but some of the points made by Wehrli were not seized on by Burkert or Zhmud and hence have not been discussed. However, the same pattern that has emerged in the consideration of the arguments for the standard view up to this point appears in these cases as well, and none of them provides convincing evidence for the standard view. Accordingly, I will not discuss them in detail here in the Introduction but instead briefly list the main points raised by Wehrli but not yet discussed and then refer the reader to the commentaries on the individual fragments involved for detailed discussion of those points. Wehrli argued that a number of points in the Pythagorean theory of desire in fragments 3 and 9 were dependent on Plato's *Philebus* and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (1967: 61). Thus, so Wehrli suggests, the notion that filling and emptying are the goals of desire is drawn from the *Philebus*. He adds that the *Precepts'* concept of acquired desire and the threefold account of deficient desire both derive from the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Finally, Wehrli contends that the Pythagorean emphasis on the appropriate, *kairos*, in fragment 10 is Peripatetic. But filling and emptying as the objects of desire are prominent in the late fifth- and early fourth-century Hippocratic treatises and are hardly a Platonic innovation; Plato and the Pythagoreans are clearly drawing on a common tradition. Neither the Pythagorean definition of desire nor any of the three terms used for mistaken desire are found in Aristotle. The notion that ethical decisions must be made in terms of what is appropriate in the specific circumstances (*kairos*) is found in both Aristotle and the *Precepts*. However, neither need depend on the other, since the basic idea probably arises from Hippocratic medicine, where the doctor has to take into account the full complexity of the specific circumstances to heal the body. Moreover, there is no trace in the

Precepts of Aristotle's most distinctive ethical doctrine in this regard, the mean, nor indeed of Aristotle's virtue ethics, which is surely surprising, if Aristoxenus were deriving his account from Aristotle. In these areas too the *Pythagorean Precepts* make sense as having arisen in the same cultural context as Plato's *Philebus* and Aristotle's ethics, but make little sense as texts written with Plato and Aristotle as their models. See the commentaries on fragments 3 and 10 for detailed discussion.

What has emerged over and over again is that, while the standard interpretation was correct to notice similarities between the *Precepts* and Platonic and Aristotelian texts, it failed to understand the true nature of those similarities. The similarities are not, in fact, with distinctive and prominent Platonic and Aristotelian ideas nor do they involve crucial Platonic and Aristotelian distinctions and terminology. Instead the similarities are usually at a very general level and involve ideas that are shared not just with Plato and Aristotle but also with many other fifth- and fourth-century authors, e.g., Democritus, Sophocles, Euripides, Thucydides, the Hippocratic corpus, Xenophon, Isocrates, and Demosthenes. In several cases the *Precepts* show connections to even earlier texts in the wisdom-literature tradition, such as Hesiod, Theognis and the sayings of the seven wise men. Thus, the *Precepts* are similar to Plato and Aristotle because they arose from the same late fifth- and fourth-century cultural traditions, traditions that are then developed differently in the *Precepts*, Plato and Aristotle. There is no problem with supposing that Plato and Aristotle knew of the Pythagorean teachings recorded by Aristoxenus; indeed Plato appears to express approval of them in his positive portrayal of the Pythagorean way of life in the *Republic*, while Aristotle appears to take issue with the Pythagorean account of luck in his own account of luck in the *Eudemian Ethics*. Plato and Aristotle clearly shared a number of the general attitudes expressed in the *Precepts*, but none of the ideas for which Plato and Aristotle are famous are anticipated there. They make excellent sense as the Pythagoreanism that Plato and Aristotle would have encountered in the fourth century and no sense as documents forged by Aristoxenus to denigrate Plato and Aristotle and exalt the Pythagoreans.

10 | The Ethical System of the *Pythagorean Precepts*

Since the *Pythagorean Precepts* have traditionally been regarded as a fabrication by Aristoxenus consisting of elements stolen from Plato and Aristotle, there has been little attempt to try to understand the ethical system they promulgate as a whole. Most scholarly attention has been directed at identifying the supposed borrowings from Plato and Aristotle. Similarly, there has been essentially no discussion of their place in the history of Greek ethics, since they have not been regarded as based on genuine Pythagorean thought. They are regarded as playing no role in the development of Greek ethics, since they simply rehash bits of Plato and Aristotle. Scholars have instead treated them as mainly evidence for Aristoxenus' Pythagorean chauvinism and antipathy to Plato. Now that I have shown that the *Precepts* are likely to reflect accurately Pythagorean thought of the late fifth and early fourth centuries, in this section of the Introduction I will attempt to rectify this situation by first trying to make sense of the ethical system of the *Precepts* as a whole and on its own terms. On the basis of this reconstruction, I will then evaluate that system in light of the history of Greek ethics. This analysis will show that the standard view has masked the very fundamental differences between the Pythagorean approach to ethics in the *Precepts* and what we find in Plato and Aristotle. The overview of the ethical system of the *Precepts* that I present below is substantially different from my earlier attempt in Huffman 2006, although it is for the most part consistent with it (for an important exception see the commentary on fr. 2, line 2).

An Overview of the Ethical System of the *Pythagorean Precepts*

The ethical system of the *Pythagorean Precepts* is based on a peculiarly Pythagorean understanding of human nature. According to the *Precepts* human beings are by nature insolent and excessive (i.e. they are

hubristic) and beset by a complex and chaotic variety of impulses, desires and emotions (fr. 8). Children are naturally unrestrained and given to excess (fr. 9); but the problems do not end with childhood, since human beings develop other stronger and more turbulent desires as they grow older, i.e. the desires for sex and honor (fr. 9). Thus, in the natural state human beings will be led to do shameful things by their lack of restraint and will not be able to accomplish anything fine or advantageous because of the chaotic and turbulent nature of their desires, which prevents rational planning. The natural state thus produces a shameless and incoherent life from which human beings need to be saved (frs. 2 and 8). They should never be allowed to do what they want, i.e. what their untutored human nature impels them to do (fr. 9). Self-control and order are thus the two highest values for the Pythagoreans (fr. 8). They are both fine in themselves and advantageous because they allow us to accomplish things through planning. It is therefore crucial that human beings have supervision that keeps them from excess and imposes order on their desires (fr. 8). This is why there is no greater evil for a Pythagorean than lack of supervision, than anarchy (“lack of rule” fr. 2). Without such supervision human beings degenerate into vice and evil (fr. 9). The centrality of this view of human nature for Pythagorean ethics was not introduced into Pythagoreanism for the first time in the *Precepts* but is a salient example of the continuity between the *Precepts* and the earlier Pythagorean ethical system presented in the *acusmata*. The *acusmata* are brief, usually one line, orally transmitted sayings that governed the Pythagorean way of life founded by Pythagoras in the sixth century (Burkert 1972: 166–92). Thus, one of the *acusmata* asks the question, “What is most truly said?” and answers, “Human beings are bad” (Iamblichus VP 82, drawing on Aristotle). Both the presence of this view in the *acusmata* and the preservation of it in the *Precepts* surely indicate that it was regarded as the position of Pythagoras himself. Its presence in the *Precepts* is one of the reasons that the fourth-century Pythagoreans could claim that their ethical system went back to the master (Iamblichus VP 251 “they preserved their original customs and studies”).

It is important to note that this view of human nature is indeed distinctively Pythagorean and was rejected by both Plato and Aristotle later in the fourth century. Plato and Aristotle did, of course, recognize that lack of self-control was a common human failing. Plato famously

presents the human soul as a chariot pulled by two horses, one of which is a dark horse whose central characteristic is insolence (*Phaedrus* 253d–254e). In the *Republic* he describes human appetite as a many-headed beast (588c). Nonetheless, neither Plato nor Aristotle sees human beings as by nature bad. In the *Phaedrus* Plato has Socrates assert that his central concern is to follow the Delphic injunction “to know thyself.” He sets out to determine whether he “is a beast more complicated and savage than Typhon” or “a tamer, simpler animal with a share of a divine and gentle nature” (230a). The Pythagoreans appear to give the former answer and it seems quite possible that Socrates/Plato is thinking of them here. Plato’s answer, however, is clearly closer to the second option. At *Laws* 766a he uses the same word as in the *Phaedrus* to assert that basic human nature is “tame” (ἡμερον) and with the right upbringing human beings can become heavenly and gentle but with bad upbringing can become the wildest of creatures. Aristotle recognizes that human appetite is directed at pleasure but roundly rejects the life directed at satisfying the desires as a life fit for a beast and not a human being (*EN* 1095b19–21). A human being is most properly identified not with his desires but with his intellect, which is the real self (*EN* 1166a16–17, 1178a2–4). Thus basic human nature is something quite different for Plato and Aristotle than it is for the Pythagoreans.

In some ways the closest parallels to the Pythagorean point of view are certain passages in Thucydides. In his description of the civil war on Corcyra (3.82–3), Thucydides describes human beings as behaving well in times of peace and prosperity but in the extreme conditions of war, when the order imposed by society has dissolved, greed (πλεονεξία) and ambition (φιλοτιμία) emerge as the primary human motivations and lead to every form of depravity (κακοτροπία). Similarly, Pericles gives a glowing description of human nature in his funeral oration but, when the plague strikes Athens shortly thereafter, human nature is quickly revealed to be something quite different. In the face of their imminent deaths, the Athenians disregard both divine and human law and pursue only the pleasure of the moment (2.53). The general point made by both these passages is summed up in concluding comments on the civil war in Corcyra. This passage is contested and may be by a later imitator rather than Thucydides himself (Gomme 1956: 382–3; Hornblower 1991: 488–9), but the words accurately describe the view of human nature that emerges in the account of the plague and the civil war and

provide a clear parallel for the Pythagorean view of human nature: “Then with the ordinary conventions of civilized life thrown into confusion, human nature, always ready to offend even where laws exist, showed itself proudly in its true colors as something incapable of controlling passion, insubordinate to the idea of justice, the enemy to anything superior to itself” (3.84, tr. R. Warner). Here, as in the *Precepts*, it is clear that basic human nature quickly leads to savagery, if the constraints imposed by human and divine law are removed. There is no evidence to suggest influence in either direction between Thucydides and the Pythagoreans. It certainly seems plausible, however, that the same human behavior that Thucydides observed in the Peloponnesian War reinforced in the Pythagoreans of the late fifth and early fourth centuries the earlier Pythagorean thesis that basic human nature could not be trusted.

The *Precepts*’ conception of what the proper goals of our actions should be is influenced by this view of human nature. The Pythagoreans assert that we should above all aim at what is noble and seemly and secondarily at what is advantageous and beneficial. Thus the Pythagoreans distinguish between what is morally superior and what is merely advantageous in prudential terms. They recognize both goals as legitimate but clearly identify moral action as our primary goal. Aristotle similarly lists the noble and the advantageous as two of the goals of action but adds pleasure as a third (*EN* 1104b30–1). He suggests that the good person will make the best decisions about which pleasures to pursue. Similarly, before Aristotle both Plato and Democritus had, in the words of Arius Didymus, located happiness in “distinguishing and discriminating pleasures” (Stobaeus 2.52.13–53.20; cf. Annas 2002: 172–7). The idea is that we can train ourselves to take pleasure in what is fine and just (Democritus fr. 207; Plato, *Leg.* 663a–d). The Pythagoreans take a radically different approach. The *Precepts* assert that “as a general rule” we should “never do anything which [has] pleasure as the aim, for this aim is for the most part unseemly and harmful” (fr. 9). The qualification “as a general rule” might allow that there are some pleasures that are acceptable goals in themselves, but Aristoxenus’ use of the phrase normally implies that there are few exceptions (see the commentary on fr. 2, line 1). The Pythagoreans think that the pursuit of pleasure is so dangerous that we ought not to risk it even if there might be rare cases where the pursuit of it might not be harmful but rather err on the side of caution

and never make pleasure a goal, “for nothing so trips us up nor throws us into error as this feeling” (fr. 9). If our nature is prone to excess and teeming with turbulent desires, it is just too dangerous to make pleasure a goal.

The Pythagorean goals, the fine and the advantageous, are commonly recognized goals of human action as we can see from Aristotle; the problem is that these terms can be cashed out in many ways. The primary goal is the fine and we have a passage from the *Precepts* that goes some way toward specifying what is meant. Fragment 5 asserts that true love of what is beautiful and fine (φιλοκαλία) “is found in our pursuits and in the sciences.” The fragment goes on to identify “customs and pursuits” (ἔθων τε καὶ ἐπιτηδευμάτων) as well as “sciences and practices” (ἐπιστημῶν τε καὶ ἐμπειριῶν) as what are truly fine, rather than the material necessities of life, which the many regard as fine. Use of the noun φιλοκαλία (“love of the fine and beautiful”) in other fourth-century texts (e.g., Xenophon and Isocrates) makes clear that it did usually refer to the pursuit of fine material goods such as clothes or weapons (see the commentary on fr. 5). Fragment 9 identifies a whole list of material goods that are the objects of acquired and superfluous desires rather than natural desires. These include luxurious and costly clothing, bedding, housing, dining services, servants, etc. We are especially to be wary of “the superfluous and insolent desires that arise among those living in power.” These include the desires for a vast variety of foods and drinks, “for there is nothing so strange that the soul of such [people] does not eagerly pursue it.” These material goods, which are considered fine by the multitude, are for the Pythagoreans a manifestation of human nature’s innate tendency to excess. The objects that are properly fine (customs, pursuits, sciences and practices) all centrally involve order and structure and impose limits rather than going on without limit. The proper objects of love are, on the one hand, systems of social order such as the traditional customs of society but also the ordered pursuits proposed in ways of life such as that found in the *Precepts* themselves. On the other hand, we should love the order found in the sciences, such as the science of harmonics that was developed by Archytas in the fourth century. But the Pythagoreans, unlike Plato, did not rest content just with the pursuit of abstract sciences but also valued the practical application of those sciences, so that e.g., Archytas was concerned to describe not some ideal of harmonics such as was proposed by Plato in the

Republic, but rather to present a scientific account of actual musical practice (Huffman 2005: 60–4, 423–5).

The connection between what is fine and what has order or structure is also emphasized by the adjective joined to the fine in frs. 5 and 9, i.e. the seemly. The Greek word translated “seemly” literally means “what has good form” (εὖσχημον). For the Pythagoreans what is noble, fine or beautiful is something that has good form, that has order. This connection is to be expected given the Pythagorean distrust of the excess and chaotic desires of basic human nature. We are supposed to pursue what is ordered and self-controlled in the first place because they are in themselves admirable. Thus, the self-control manifested in engaging in sex infrequently and only under the proper circumstances (fr. 9) is fine in itself. On the other hand the first sort of mistaken desire for the Pythagoreans is shamelessness (ἄσχημοσύνη – “what lacks proper form”), i.e. the pursuit of something whose excess marks it as shameful in itself, such as incest or having sex in public (frs. 3 and 9).

According to the Pythagoreans, after the pursuit of what is fine, our secondary goal should be what is advantageous and beneficial. These terms admit of a number of possible interpretations. Thus, in the *Republic* Thrasymachus argues that Socrates should not tell him that justice is the advantageous or the beneficial because these terms are too vague (*Resp.* 336c–d), although his own definition of justice turns out to be “the advantage of the stronger.” We have just seen, however, that fragment 5 makes clear that the things considered advantageous and beneficial by Greek society as a whole (e.g., material possessions and power) are not what the Pythagoreans have in mind. An example of what is advantageous might be eating certain sorts of foods. These foods are not fine in themselves but they are advantageous in that they do not produce a disturbance in the soul (fr. 9). An even more marked example of something that is useful and advantageous is belief in the gods. There is no hint that the Pythagoreans regarded such belief as in itself fine. Rather, belief in the gods is useful (fr. 8) for attaining our proper goal, self-control and order. If we think that the gods are paying attention to our actions, we will limit our natural tendency to excess (fr. 8). It thus appears that the advantageous and the beneficial will mostly be cashed out in terms of what produces the most order and self-control in our lives. Anything that allows us to plan and that keeps us from acting haphazardly will also be advantageous, since planning will produce the

proper order in our lives. Even our friendships and emotions should be planned and not arise haphazardly to the degree possible (fr. 11). Of course some of what is advantageous and beneficial will be what is necessary for life: basic food, clothing and shelter. The Pythagoreans, however, argue that these things are the “spoils of the true love of what is fine and beautiful” (fr. 5). There is no explicit argument to support this point but presumably the idea is that if self-control and order are our primary goals we will find ourselves needing only very modest food, clothing and shelter, so modest that they will be easy to obtain and thus the “spoils” of our self-controlled life. This looks like an early version of the argument that virtue is sufficient for a good life.

Fragment 9 says that determining both what is fine and seemly and also what is advantageous and beneficial requires no ordinary judgment. This appeal to expert judgment introduces the strong emphasis on expertise and experience in the *Precepts*. The Pythagoreans do not leave the discussion of the fine, the seemly, the advantageous and the beneficial at the general level but discuss these concepts in a series of specific domains. The first example is desire. Above all else the Pythagoreans emphasize how complicated (ποικίλον) and manifold (πολυειδέστατον) desire is (frs. 3 and 9). The emphasis on complexity is important here, and it will be repeated in a series of other aspects of human life. It is precisely the complexity of desire that brings forth the need for expertise. The Pythagoreans stress in fragment 9 that desire is in need of the greatest care (ἐπιμελείας), guarding (φυλακῆς) and no ordinary training (σωμασκίας). In order to deal with our desires properly, we must distinguish the natural and appropriate desires from those that are acquired and superfluous. This is a task that is complicated by the fact that desires are, of all things in human life, most prone to advance without limit, so that, if we are not careful, we are confronted with an ever-increasing number of them.

The problem of diet provides a second example of the role of expertise in human life (fr. 9). This difficulty, in fact, arises out of the problems presented by desire and once again complexity plays a central role. The tendency of our desires to grow without limit has led us to eat a seemingly unlimited number of fruits, roots and meats and to devise all sorts of ways of preparing them. The Pythagoreans assert that it is difficult to find any animal of land, air or water that people do not eat. The problem is that each food produces a distinct condition in us and

human beings display “manifold forms of madness” as a result of the disturbances in the soul caused by the huge variety of things we eat. Humans notice the affect that alcohol has on them but fail to recognize the effects of other foods. Once again we are in need of an expert who has the skill to recognize “what sort and how many things should be employed for nourishment” (fr. 9). Diet thus has a central role in Pythagorean ethics. In order to live a self-controlled and ordered life we must avoid foods that disturb our soul and thus make it hard for us to live in a rational way.

Once again the *Precepts* can here be seen to build on and develop an important theme in the earlier *acusmata*. One of the central features of the *acusmata* is dietary taboos, such as the famous ban on eating beans. Burkert pointed out that many of these dietary taboos have parallels in Greek religion and that what the *acusmata* did was take taboos that were applied to specific rituals and apply them to the whole of life (1972: 166–91). There are no specific dietary taboos in the *Precepts*, and the discussion of diet appears to be based on Greek rational medicine and its understanding of the effect of various foods on human beings. Indeed, concern with diet is an absolutely central feature of Greek medical texts at the time when the *Precepts* were composed, i.e. the late fifth and early fourth centuries (see for example the treatise *On Regimen*). In his other works on the Pythagoreans, Aristoxenus went out of his way to emphasize that Pythagoras himself did not promulgate some of the most prominent dietary restrictions that appear in the Pythagorean tradition, such as vegetarianism and the ban on beans (fr. 25). We cannot be sure where Aristoxenus got his evidence for these assertions, but it seems quite likely that it would be from the Pythagoreans with whom he associated in his youth, i.e. the Pythagoreans who composed the *Precepts*. We can imagine then that these Pythagoreans were anxious to claim that Pythagoras did not promote irrational taboos but that he based dietary restrictions on the same sort of rational considerations that govern the view of diet in the *Precepts*. It is noticeable then that some of the assertions about why we might avoid beans or conversely embrace them that are found in the tradition have a distinctly rational cast that fits with what is said about diet in the *Precepts*. Thus, Aristoxenus reports that Pythagoras, in fact, ate beans because of their laxative properties (fr. 25). Other reports try to explain the ban on beans as arising from the fact that they can cause digestive problems that disturb us (Diog. Laert.

8.24). Indeed, the kind of beans in question, fava beans, possess an amino acid that can produce serious allergic reactions in some people (Burkert 1972: 184). So it may be that the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* were not anxious to support any universal ban on beans but rather took the view that eaten in the right amounts by some people, such as Pythagoras himself, they aided our digestion, while certain people certainly should avoid them because they produce serious disturbances. Such is the complexity of the human diet and the need for expertise in this area.

A third important and extensive area in which we require expertise is our interactions with other human beings. Our relations with others must be governed by what is appropriate (εὐκταίον). As in the case of desire the Pythagoreans stress that “the practice of what is appropriate is something complex and has many forms” (fr. 10). In this case the complexity arises because of the rich texture of social relationships. In each case our actions must be based on the specifics of the situation and should take into account such things as the relative age of the persons with whom we are dealing, whether they have a family relationship to us, their status, and whether they are our benefactors. The Pythagoreans suggest that certain sorts of anger may be legitimate if directed by a young person to another young person but young people must never direct anger towards their elders. Similarly, it may be appropriate to speak frankly towards someone who is our equal but such blunt speaking is inappropriate when we are speaking to someone with a deserved reputation for nobility. The Pythagoreans go on to say that in determining the appropriate we need to take into account not just the social relationships just discussed but also what is timely, what is suitable and what is fitting, given these relationships. Despite the complexity of the subject, the *Precepts* assert that the appropriate is teachable to a point. Thus we can learn from the expert, but there is also the implication that we need to rely on our own experience.

One crucial area of human interaction for the Pythagoreans, friendship, received a separate treatment (fr. 11). For the Pythagoreans as for the Greeks in general, friendship was a broad concept that included not just relationships between people of basically the same age and status but also relationships that correspond to some of the four categories mentioned in the last paragraph. Thus, we can be friends with elders, with benefactors and with people who have close ties to our family. There is no explicit emphasis on the complexity of friendship or the need for

expert advice but both themes are present implicitly. The most notable feature of the account of friendship in the *Precepts* is the dominance of the central Pythagorean value, order. Thus, the Pythagoreans insist that friendships should not “arise negligently or without plan but rather with reverence, consideration and proper order” (fr. 11). Indeed, the Pythagoreans go so far as to assert that this is not just true of friendly feelings but that no emotion should be allowed to be “aroused without plan, casually and mistakenly” (fr. 11). The Pythagorean strategy for insuring that proper order is preserved in friendship and in emotions in general is to emphasize customary practice and habit. They supposed that successful friendships are those that follow custom and in which roles and responsibilities are “clearly defined.” The goal is to insure that as few as possible “wounds and ulcerations” will arise in friendships (fr. 11). Trust in the friend and the stability of the relationship are paramount. Indeed, no friendship should be renounced because of the change in fortune of our friend but only if the friend embraces great evil. Thus the Pythagoreans stress that competition should be removed from friendship since it has the potential to arouse anger (on the Pythagorean attitude to competition, see further below) and cause a breach between friends. Other conflicts can be avoided if friends follow clearly defined and customary practices. Above all, both members of the friendship need to know how to control their anger and to yield to the other. The younger in particular needs to yield to the elder. On the other hand, the elder has to use great tact and show great solicitude in correcting and admonishing the young. This reminds us that the Greeks saw friendship as having a strong educative role, particularly friendships between parents and children but also friendships between the young and the old. So it emerges that friendship too is a complex matter that requires considerable planning.

The treatment of friendship starkly illustrates the focus on controlling our emotions and desires in the *Precepts*. The emphasis is not on the role of love or affection in friendship but rather on feeling emotions in an orderly way. However, there are some traces of a more positive attitude towards emotion elsewhere. In at least two situations the Pythagoreans call on us not to limit our emotions but to lead them into accord with our reason. Thus, in fragment 2 we are told that “rulers must not only be knowledgeable but also love humanity” and that “the ruled must not only be obedient but also love the rulers.” Similarly in fragment 6 the

Pythagoreans assert that all learning of sciences and arts best reaches its end if the student does not just act under compulsion but engages in learning willingly, and fragment 10 makes clear that the teacher too must be willing. In these cases then, the Pythagoreans recognize that there is both an intellectual and an affective aspect to virtuous action.

Two of the dominant themes in the *Precepts*, the need for expertise and the importance of order, emerge particularly clearly in the relation to the most intimate of human relationships, sex and reproduction. Sex and reproduction are central to Pythagorean ethics because they regarded improper procreation along with faulty child-rearing as “the most powerful and the clearest cause of the vice and badness of most men” (fr. 9). Two crucial restrictions emphasize the order that must be placed on sexuality. First, precocity should be avoided at all costs and the young should not engage in sex until age twenty, and preferably not even know about it until then. This is particularly remarkable in a society where young girls typically married as young teenagers (at 13–14 years). Second, even after that age the individual should rarely engage in sex and there should be as many hindrances to sex as possible. These heavy restrictions on sexuality are not the result of some irrational prudishness, but flow from the Pythagorean conviction that the circumstances under which procreation occurs have a determining effect on the moral capabilities of the offspring. If we engage in sex when we are too young and hence not fully developed, or when living a disordered life, or particularly when in disordered states such as drunkenness or when disturbed by the violence that accompanies rape, the seed produced will be similarly disordered and unsound and the resulting children will be incapable of the order necessary for a good life. Human procreation is so important that it cannot be left to chance and more than anything else in life requires forethought and planning (fr. 9).

Determining the proper circumstances for procreation is yet another area of complexity in human life which calls for expertise. The Pythagoreans build on a theme in the Greek aristocratic tradition that goes back at least to the sixth-century poet Theognis, by comparing human reproduction to the rearing of animals. If dog- or bird-fanciers take breeding seriously, surely it is even more crucial that human beings do so. Thus, we must make sure that the parents are suited to one another and that they procreate at the right time and when they are in the right condition. There is no indication that the Pythagoreans wanted

to turn these decisions over to the state as Plato proposes in the *Republic*, but they clearly think that members of the Pythagorean community need to pick their mates carefully (or have them picked for them by parents) and give great forethought to their offspring. Above all, they must ensure that they come to procreation having lived, and still living, in a temperate and healthy way. The concern with the circumstances under which procreation occurs and their effect on the child has a marked effect on Pythagorean attitudes towards abortion. The Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* think that offspring brought about through violence (i.e. rape) or with inappropriate parents (e.g., incest) or even when the parents are in seriously disordered states such as drunkenness will be morally defective because their constitutions will reflect the disorder of the circumstances of their procreation. Such offspring will inevitably be evil and cannot be raised. The Pythagoreans stress above all that procreation should not occur in such circumstances with the result that no abortion would be necessary, but in cases where procreation does occur “without plan and haphazardly,” they advocated abortion.

There is one final area in which the Pythagoreans emphasized the need for expertise. They noted that “in the case of the sciences, it does not belong to just any intellect, after having looked at the parts of the investigation, to understand and distinguish well what sort of thing is a starting point of these things” (fr. 10). The starting point is crucial because “nothing of the things that follow after will still be sound if the true starting point is not known.” In the first instance they are probably thinking of axiomatic deductive systems, such as Greek geometry, that start with certain definitions and axioms from which the rest of the system is developed (e.g., Euclid’s *Elements*). At least some of the Pythagoreans responsible for the *Precepts* are likely to be pupils of Philolaus, since Aristoxenus identifies his teacher Xenophilus along with a group of Pythagoreans from Phlius as pupils of Philolaus and Eurytus (Diog. Laert. 8.46 = Aristoxenus fr. 19 Wehrli). It is noticeable then that Philolaus developed a method of “starting points” (ἀρχαί) according to which it is crucial in each area of investigation to identify the minimum number of basic principles necessary in order to explain the phenomena in that area (Huffman 1993: 78–92). Thus, at the most general level, Philolaus thought that three “starting points” needed to be identified in order to explain the cosmos as a whole: limiters, unlimiteds and harmony (fr. 6). On the other hand, in a more specific field such as

disease, Philolaus identified three “starting points,” bile, blood and phlegm as basic principles from which all diseases can be explained (A27). It looks like Aristoxenus’ Pythagorean teachers and associates were good pupils of Philolaus because they seem to be promulgating something very like Philolaus’ method of ἀρχαί here in the *Precepts*. They make one crucial addition to Philolaus’ approach in fragment 10. They expand it from the sciences to the political and social order. Just as no science can be successful if the proper starting points are not identified so no household or city can be well managed if the proper starting point, i.e. the proper ruler, has not been selected. The crucial point is that all sorts of supervision, whether in the household, the school or the city, must be such that both the supervisor and the supervised are willing. This is only possible if “one who is truly ruler and master . . . has willingly initiated the rule and authority” (fr. 10). Again, the difficulty of this undertaking is obvious. “It does not belong to just any intellect” to identify such a supervisor.

Here we are faced with a question that has been lurking in the previous discussions of the complexity of many aspects of human life and the corresponding need for an expert. How are we to identify the expert? One of the surviving fragments of the *Precepts* addresses just this question. Fragment 9 begins by discussing which opinions should be heeded and which not. The Pythagoreans say that it is “foolish to heed every opinion and the opinion of every person, and especially to heed the opinion that arises among the many.” On the other hand, we will never learn anything if we reject every opinion. If we lack knowledge we must learn from those who have knowledge and thus heed the opinion of “the one who knows.” Up to this point what has been said is very similar to what is said in a famous passage of Plato’s *Crito*. In that passage Socrates argues that in deciding whether he should try to escape from prison they should not heed the opinions of all men but rather the opinions of some and not others (47a). If we were athletes we would not consider the opinion of every person but only the opinion of the one who knows, the expert, in this case, the athletic trainer (47b). Similarly in the case of whether it is right or wrong to escape from prison we should not consider the opinion of the multitude but rather that of the one who knows (47c–d). However, when it comes to identifying the person who knows, Plato and the Pythagoreans part company.

In the case of the *Crito* no expert is identified but the dialogue proceeds on the assumption that the best they can do is to apply the elenchus to the situation, i.e. to examine by argument the position that Socrates has adopted now and in the past on how we should live our lives and how that relates to his present circumstances. The implication is that the one who knows is the one whose argument can survive the elenchus. Socrates clearly asserts that he is someone who always follows the argument that appears best to him upon reflection (46b). There is nothing like this in the *Precepts*. There is no appeal to what rational argument shows to be best. Instead we are told that the young, if they are going to be saved, must pay attention to the “opinions of their elders and of those who have lived nobly.” It seems likely that these two conditions are to be taken together. In general, we are to regard our elders as the experts, but even here we should not follow the opinion of the majority of our elders but instead should follow the opinion of those among our elders who have lived nobly, i.e. those whose lives have been recognized as exemplary. There is an obvious difficulty here since we are left with the problem of determining what counts as living nobly. The *Precepts* provide no clear guidance but the idea is probably that the young should not follow the lead of all the elders in their city-state but should rather follow the opinions of senior members of the Pythagorean community, who are recognized within that community as having lived a particularly fine life. Those who have lived nobly may be primarily those who have followed the Pythagorean way of life. However, the interest of Pythagoreans such as Echecrates in the life of Socrates, at least in Plato’s depiction in the *Phaedo* (57a), suggests that the Pythagoreans may have recognized noble lives outside of their own circle.

One would expect that the *Precepts* themselves were regarded as embodying the expertise of these leaders of the Pythagorean community, and it is likely that they were regarded as embodying the essential principles of Pythagoras himself. However, the *Precepts* cannot be the final guide on how to act because they provide general guidelines and rules but do not deal with specific situations. The earlier *acusmata* do give very specific advice on a number of points, e.g., what foods should not be eaten (beans) or what shoe to put on first (the right). Nowhere in the *Precepts* do we find advice at this level of specificity. The *Precepts* tell us that every food has a specific effect on us, and thus what we eat is crucial, but they do not tell us the effect of each food or what we should in

fact eat for breakfast. They tell us the general factors that we need to take into account in dealing with other people (e.g., their family relationship to us, their age in relation to us, whether they are our benefactors, etc.) but do not tell us what to do in specific situations that we confront. Why do the *Precepts* not give such specific advice? It would appear to be because the Pythagoreans of the late fifth and early fourth centuries had come to recognize that what needs to be done in a specific situation depends on too many factors unique to the situation for it to be possible to formulate rules for the specific situation in advance. We know that we should in general eat foods that foster tranquility, but what foods those are depends on the specific constitution and state of health of the individuals involved as well as, perhaps, the climate and environment in which they live. The complexity that leads to the need for an expert does away with the hope of any simple set of rules that fit all situations. It could also be, although this is far less certain, that the Pythagoreans came to recognize that not all of these questions were settled yet, that medicine was still making progress in understanding the effects of foods on people of different constitution. Thus, even if you could specify what should be eaten by a person of a certain constitution in a certain environment, it is possible that the expert might develop a better answer later.

Thus the *Precepts* do not provide detailed rules for living our lives as the *acusmata* did. Instead, they set forth the general principles that should guide the individual decisions we make and identify the factors that need to be taken into account in applying those principles. Our final decision on what to do will be determined by how we apply the principles in light of the relevant factors. One might think that the final factor in arriving at a decision is the reasoning of the individual involved and this is surely true to a degree. However, given the heavily hierarchical structure of the Pythagorean community as revealed in the *Precepts*, it is clear that a large role will be played by the senior members of the Pythagorean community. The *Precepts* specifically tell us that the role of old men is to give “counsel with all of their knowledge” (fr. 2). Elsewhere the *Precepts* stress that such advice must be given with “much tact” (fr. 11). So the Pythagoreans do not assert that the young should think for themselves. Rather, we should study the *Precepts* and learn the basic principles and relevant factors but in making actual decisions should follow the advice of senior members of the community. After years of

studying the advice of elders in specific situations, the individual will, in old age, become sufficiently experienced to make his or her own decisions and to guide the young in turn.

So far we have seen that the central focus of Pythagorean ethics is on establishing order in our lives by controlling our innate tendency to excess and our complex set of desires. Somewhat surprisingly perhaps the Pythagoreans also value being manly. In fragment 9 the proper training of both the child and the young man is said to be “noble, temperate and manly (ἀνδρικῆς),” but nothing further is said about what it means to be manly. It would appear that Pythagorean manliness is much more restricted than was typical in the rest of Greek society. In fragment 11 the Pythagoreans advise that competition and rivalry should be removed from all types of friendship, if possible, because competition arouses anger, which can destroy a friendship. So Pythagoreans are not supposed to be manly in the sense of being highly competitive. Similarly they are to be wary of the “desires that are covetous of honor,” because of the turbulence that these strong desires introduce into our lives (fr. 9). Thus the Pythagoreans are not going to emulate the Homeric hero, who is very jealous of his honor, but rather learn the lesson of Achilles’ anger. We might suppose that there is scope for competition with enemies, but the *Precepts* advise that we should never be responsible for a dispute or initiate enmity but rather “as much as possible take precautions that a dispute not begin” (fr. 11). The one exception is the case of someone who is totally bad and unwilling to change. It would seem that the scope of Pythagorean manliness is limited to this case. Once the Pythagorean has initiated the enmity against such a person, he or she must “be nobly steadfast and fight through to the end” (fr. 11). Thus, manliness for the Pythagoreans means being steadfast in the fight against evil, but they thought that one should not easily declare someone evil and should make every attempt to avoid conflict.

At this point almost all of the main features of the Pythagorean ethical system in the *Precepts* have been considered. Only one central topic remains: luck. We might initially wonder why the Pythagoreans would discuss luck when setting out their way of life in the *Precepts*. Luck seems to be something that happens to us rather than something that we can incorporate into our way of life. The Pythagoreans discuss luck, in part, precisely because it is something not in our control. As we have seen, the Pythagoreans thought that our lives should be ordered

and governed by careful planning. They clearly suppose that we are largely in control of our lives and that by following the *Precepts* we can live a better life. They were realistic enough to recognize, however, that good planning does not always lead to good results and that sometimes people who do not plan are successful. Moreover, they recognized that some people who tried to follow the guidance of the *Precepts* nonetheless were unable to live an ordered life. These cases in which the degree of planning and effort do not produce the expected result were explained by the Pythagoreans as the result of luck. The *Precepts* envisage two different situations in which luck is involved in human life and accordingly distinguish two sorts of luck: divine luck and inborn luck (fr. 7).

In the first situation one individual plans carefully and takes all the correct precautions and still fails. On the other hand, another individual does not plan and does not take correct precautions and still succeeds. The *Precepts* say that in these cases luck is something imposed from outside, since the result is contrary to what we would expect from the factors internal to the situation. The Pythagoreans call this divine luck since they think that in these cases inspiration arises from some divinity leading to better or worse than expected results. This conception of the divine is very much in accord with early Greek presentations of the divine. For example, the Homeric hero can often be found blaming a god or goddess when he is thwarted in battle despite having fought well. Thus Menelaus blames Zeus when his sword breaks when he is about to kill Paris in their one-on-one battle in Book 3 of the *Iliad* (365–8). Aristotle refers to this sort of luck in the *Eudemian Ethics* (1247a27–9) but refuses to ascribe it to the gods on the grounds that the gods would not reward those who do not plan properly and frustrate those who do. It is not clear how the Pythagoreans would respond to Aristotle's critique. The *Precepts* explicitly argue that human beings should believe that the gods exist and pay attention to human affairs so that there will be a check on our innate insolence (fr. 8). This view presupposes Aristotle's view of the gods, i.e. that they punish the bad behavior produced by our natural insolence and reward our attempts to rein in that insolence. If we believe that the gods do not pay any attention to our efforts to plan our lives in accordance with reason and even sometimes reward those who follow their unbridled insolence, it would appear that there is little reason to follow the elaborate code of life found in the *Precepts*. Perhaps

the Pythagoreans are conceding that in some cases, for reasons that are unclear, the gods do not reward the behavior that we would expect, while at the same time arguing that it is beneficial for us to believe that in most cases the gods do pay attention to and reward good behavior so that we will check our natural insolence.

As we have seen, divine luck is conceived of as being imposed from outside. The second sort of luck, inborn luck, comes from within, as its name suggests. The Pythagoreans clearly had experience in teaching a wide range of students and they observed that “some people are born gifted and with the ability to hit the mark” while “others are born dull” so that “their thought is never borne towards the target but is always confused” (fr. 7). Some people are just born with souls that are more orderly and others with souls that are more turbulent. The latter will be less able to hit the mark in whatever they attempt. As we have seen, the Pythagoreans regarded human desire and human interactions with others as very complex and in need of great expertise. Those born with orderly souls have a much greater chance of navigating these complexities than those beset by turbulence. Inborn luck is thus a sort of natural endowment similar to the modern idea of one’s genetic makeup. One crucial difference between the Pythagoreans and modern genetics, however, is that while the Pythagoreans agree that the child’s natural temperament is derived from the parents, what the child inherits from them is not a strict matter of the genes that they in turn inherited from their parents but rather depends directly on how the parents lived their lives. If the parents live an ordered and temperate life and, most importantly, if they conceive the child when engaging in orderly and temperate intercourse, the child will have an orderly soul. If, on the other hand, the parents are drunk or out of control in intercourse, the child will have a turbulent soul that is never able to hit the mark. Unlike divine luck, inborn luck is to some extent under human control. It is out of the control of the individual who has it but it is in the control of the parents who conceived the child. Thus the Pythagoreans thought that proper procreation was absolutely crucial to the moral development of the child and to the moral health of the community. The *Precepts* assert that procreating and educating children haphazardly and without plan is the most powerful cause of vice and badness (fr. 9). As we have seen, the Pythagoreans even favored abortion of fetuses that were begotten in bad circumstances (fr. 9), because the children they develop into will

inevitably have the bad sort of inborn luck that makes them unable to live a moral life.

Having completed the overview of the ethical system of the *Precepts*, we are in a position to see two surprising features of that ethical system, given typical preconceptions about Pythagoreanism. First, the *Precepts* are resolutely focused on this world and overwhelmingly rational in their outlook. There is no hint of the doctrine of metempsychosis, which is one of the doctrines that we can assign with most certainty to the historical Pythagoras. The gods are mentioned, but only in relation to the here and now. We are told that it is useful to believe that the gods exist and this may entail engaging in some religious cult but unlike the earlier Pythagorean *acusmata*, the *Precepts* have nothing to say about specific religious practices (e.g., nothing about not sacrificing white cocks, see Iambl. *VP* 84).

The second surprising feature of the *Precepts* is the lack of emphasis on mathematics and the almost total lack of any reference to number. It is true that in fragment 5 the sciences (ἐπιστήμαι) are recognized as one of the truly fine things, and in fragment 10 the importance of identifying the right starting point in the sciences is emphasized. The quadrivium of mathematical studies recognized by Archytas (fr. 1) is surely at the front of the minds of the Pythagoreans when making these comments, and these studies are thus envisaged as part of the good life. But does mathematics influence the formulation of the *Precepts* as a whole? Perhaps their influence can be seen in fragment 2, in the association of order with due proportion (συμμετρία) and disorder with lack of proportion (ἄσυμμετρία). Other fragments use positive and negative terms that have mathematical and musical associations (fr. 4 εὐρυθμία “what has good rhythm”; fr. 3 ἀσχημοσύνη, ἄσυμμετρία – “lack of form,” “lack of proportion”). However, all of these terms can be used without any particular mathematical overtones. Most noticeable of all is the absence of any reference both to number in general and also to any specific numbers or ratios. Thus, in fragment 4 there are strong admonitions that children should be generated in an orderly way, yet there is nothing like Plato’s famous nuptial number which is supposed to govern the proper couplings of the guardians in the *Republic* (546a–d). Nor is there anything to compare with Socrates’ assertion that the just man is 729 times happier than the unjust man (587e), even if Plato is having some fun here. Nowhere in the *Precepts* do we find the specific numbers, especially

numbers between one and ten, associated with aspects of our life as is done in treatises much later in the Pythagorean tradition, such as the *Theologumena Arithmeticae*, or as was done early in the Pythagorean tradition with doctrines such as the *tetraktys*, which extol the mystical power of the first four numbers (Iambl. VP 82 – from Aristotle). Thus, the *Precepts* call on us to re-evaluate our preconceptions about fifth- and fourth-century Pythagoreans. Plato may turn out to be more “Pythagorean” than the actual Pythagoreans of his day.

The Pythagorean Precepts and the History of Greek Ethical Thought

With this description of the contents of the *Precepts* before us, it is appropriate to ask how they fit into the history of, and to what extent they are a contribution to, Greek ethical thought. If we look at the characteristics of Greek ethics in the context of ethical thought in the western world as a whole, the *Precepts* appear anomalous. Ancient Greek ethics is generally said to be characterized by two prominent features: 1) the identification of εὐδαιμονία (happiness) as the goal of life and 2) a focus on a set of virtues (ἀρεταί) as states of character that for most ancient philosophers are either necessary or sufficient to attain happiness. The standard view of the *Pythagorean Precepts*, which argues that Aristoxenus constructed them on the basis of his familiarity with Plato and Aristotle, has masked a crucial fact about the *Precepts*. Neither of these two central characteristics of the ethics of Plato and Aristotle and, indeed, of the whole Greek tradition starting with Socrates is prominent in the *Precepts*.

Eudaimonist theories assume that there is an ultimate end of all our actions, which is εὐδαιμονία (“happiness” or “living well”). The business of eudaimonist theories is to determine what happiness consists in and how best to achieve it (Striker 1987: 188, cf. Annas 1993). There is some controversy as to whether this tradition begins already with Democritus (pro Annas 2002, con Kahn 1998). Scholars have typically seen it as beginning with Socrates and continuing in Plato and Aristotle. Thus, in Socrates’ protreptic for philosophy in the *Euthydemus* (278e–282d), it is assumed that our goal in life is happiness and argued that we become happy by wise use of good things. Similarly in the *Gorgias* (472c–d) Socrates makes clear that the central question of ethics is “who is happy?”

The same question is prominent in passages where Plato himself is likely to be speaking. Thus the focus in the *Republic* is on whether the just are happier than the unjust (352d) and the decisive conclusion is that the just man is happiest (580c). In the *Symposium* Diotima, presumably speaking for Plato, identifies happiness as the ultimate end (205a). Aristotle, building on these passages in Plato, begins the *Nicomachean Ethics* by arguing that there is one ultimate end (τέλος) at which all of our actions aim (1094a19–27) and that this ultimate good is happiness (1097b20). He then argues that the goodness of anything consists in excellent performance of its function (ἔργον) and thus that we can define human happiness as excellent performance of the human function, i.e. an active life in accordance with virtue (1098a16–18). If we turn to the *Precepts* with this tradition in mind, it is conspicuous that there is no trace of the language of happiness: neither the abstract noun (εὐδαιμονία), nor the related adjective (εὐδαίμων) or verb (εὐδαιμονέω) appear. Nor do the *Precepts* identify any other unifying goal for our actions like Democritus' cheerfulness (εὐθυμία). The closest that the *Precepts* come to such a goal is to say that in our actions we should look to the fine and the seemly and secondarily at what is advantageous and beneficial (fr. 9). However, there is no attempt to show that the fine has anything other than moral worth, no attempt to show that pursuing it leads to a happy life. The Greek word for goal (τέλος) appears only once and not in the context of the goal of our life and there is no trace of Aristotle's function argument. It is thus hard to see how the *Precepts* can be described as eudaimonist.

In the case of the second main feature of the Greek ethical tradition, the emphasis on the virtues (ἀρεταί) and how they are related to happiness, the situation is similar. It is well known that the Greek word for virtue (ἀρετή) has the broad sense of "excellence." It can refer to the military prowess of the Homeric warrior as well as to the political skills of the leading figures in the Greek city-states of the fifth century. The public at large would see it as including noble birth, wealth, good looks and bodily strength (Meyer 2008: 11). Plato's dialogues "abound with people who seek excellence for themselves or their children" (Meyer 2008: 8). Part of what Socrates and Plato accomplish is to turn this largely external sense of "excellence" into one where excellence refers to states of character corresponding to traditional virtues such as piety, courage, wisdom, self-control and justice. Plato presents Socrates as seeking

definitions of each of these virtues in a series of dialogues (e.g., piety in the *Euthyphro* and courage in the *Laches*), and in the *Meno* the focus is on the definition of virtue itself. Aristotle builds on this tradition. He distinguishes moral from intellectual virtue and defines moral virtue through his famous doctrine of the mean (EN 1106b36–1107a2) before going on to discuss the individual moral virtues in detail. The situation in the *Precepts* is significantly different. The word for virtue in general (ἀρετή) does not appear nor is there any attempt to define this concept using any other terminology. Only three of the traditional virtues are mentioned and only once each (wisdom [σοφία] and temperance [σωφροσύνη] both in fragment 9; piety [όσιότης] in fragment 8). There is no attempt to define any of the three. Adjectives related to the virtues are used in eight cases. Five of these describe some action as temperate. These are all in fragment 9 (Iambl. VP 200–13) which can reasonably be said to highlight temperate behavior and was indeed used by Iamblichus as part of his account of the virtue of temperance (VP 187–216). There are two passing references to “manly training” (fr. 9) and one to a “pious” action (fr. 11). Thus, in strong contrast to both Plato and Aristotle, the *Precepts* are simply not centered on the general concept of virtue or on detailed discussions of any of the individual virtues.

We might suppose that the central concepts of happiness and virtue do not appear because the *Precepts* only survive in fragments and that they appeared in parts of the book that have not survived. Yet, we have reasonably extensive fragments of the text and it is hard to believe that so little trace of the concepts of happiness and virtue would appear in them, if these concepts played a large role elsewhere in the text. Moreover, Iamblichus structures his account of the Pythagorean way of life according to the virtues of piety (VP 134–56), wisdom (VP 157–66), justice (VP 167–86), temperance (VP 187–213) and courage (VP 214–28). He clearly had good access to the *Precepts*, since he quotes them extensively, yet nothing from the *Precepts* is quoted for three of these virtues and only a small passage is quoted under the virtue of justice (VP 174–6), and that passage does not explicitly mention justice. It is only in the case of temperance that Iamblichus quotes an extensive passage from the *Precepts* (VP 200–13) that uses the vocabulary of temperance. Surely Iamblichus would have made more use of the treatment of the virtues in the *Precepts* if such a treatment existed.

The lack of discussion of happiness and virtue in the *Precepts* points to a very important point about the similarities that exist between the *Precepts* and Platonic and Aristotelian texts: those similarities tend to deal with specific rules of behavior rather than with philosophical approach. How then are we to explain the different approach in the *Precepts* and their lack of emphasis on the two central concepts of Greek ethics? The obvious answer is that the *Precepts* were composed without the influence of the powerful Platonic and Aristotelian discussion of these concepts. The most plausible scenario under which this would be true is if they were developed before Plato and Aristotle wrote and if Aristoxenus' presentation of them, even if he was writing after Plato and Aristotle, was faithful to his source and not extensively colored by the Greek ethics of his time. The absence of happiness and virtue as central concepts, of course, makes little sense on the traditional view according to which Aristoxenus composed them in full knowledge of Platonic and Aristotelian ethics and was attempting to ascribe sophisticated Aristotelian and Platonic ideas back to the earlier Pythagoreans in order to glorify them.

As has been noted above, Plato in the *Republic* has Socrates say that Pythagoras was loved as a private teacher and that even in his day, long after Pythagoras was dead, certain people were conspicuous for living a way of life that they called Pythagorean. This means that at the time when he was writing the *Republic* (usually thought to be in the 380s) Plato knew of a Pythagorean way of life that he seems to regard favorably. The *acusmata* with their assortment of irrational taboos seem unlikely to be the object of Plato's attention so that he must be referring to another manifestation of the Pythagorean life that was before his eyes in the 380s. As I have argued in my critique of the standard interpretation of the *Precepts* above, this is likely to be the life promulgated by Aristoxenus' teacher Xenophilus and followed by the Pythagoreans from Phlius, including the Echebrates mentioned in the *Phaedo*, with whom Aristoxenus associated. We cannot be sure when this way of life was first formulated and who formulated it. These early fourth-century Pythagoreans are said to be the pupils of Philolaus and Eurytus so we might suppose that it goes back to one or both of these figures. However, the rigorous rationalism of the approach in the *Precepts* as well as other details suggests that they are a product of the late fifth-century enlightenment (see further below). This suggests that Xenophilus was the key

figure. He could have been born as early as 440 (assuming that we can trust the tradition that he lived to 105 and was active to the end – Sophocles was still composing tragedies at age 90) and thus be mature enough to devise such a system by 400.

The *Precepts* are thus properly regarded as a Preplatonic document and indeed in a certain sense Presocratic, since, even if they were composed in the lifetime of Socrates, they are largely innocent of the influence of Socrates, whose full impact arises because of Plato's presentation of him. If the *Precepts* are Presocratic, some might argue that they do not contribute to the history of Greek ethics because, starting with Aristotle and memorably confirmed in Cicero's famous statement that Socrates "called philosophy down from the skies" (*Tusculan Disputations* 5.4.10), Socrates has been regarded as the founder of the Greek ethical tradition. It has long been recognized that this is an oversimplification (e.g., Guthrie 1969: 417–25). Aristotle, in fact, mentions Pythagoras first in his survey of previous ethical thinkers, although he dismisses him in three brief sentences and refers only to his supposed attempt to define virtues in terms of numbers (*MM* 1182a10–14). He then jumps quickly to Socrates and his more extensive treatment of him clearly shows that for Aristotle it was Socrates who was the real founder of ethics (*MM* 1182a15, cf. *EE* 1216b15, *Metaph.* 987b1 and 1078b17). Aristotle notwithstanding, a number of ethical issues are addressed by early Presocratic thinkers such as Xenophanes, Heraclitus and Empedocles. In the latter part of the fifth century the professional teachers known as sophists clearly dealt with issues central to ethics and there are over two hundred "ethical" fragments of Democritus. But ethical thought is not limited to people identified by modern scholars as philosophers. Greek literature as a whole put forth several compelling accounts of the good life. It is possible to identify two competing models of the proper human life in this period: 1) the heroic code of the Homeric hero with its competitive pursuit of glory through physical prowess, which values material goods as a sign of the hero's accomplishment and 2) Hesiod's alternative which emphasizes hard work and justice in the court and rather than exalting the arrogance of the Homeric hero calls for moderation (e.g., Kahn 1998). One might also think of the code of behavior that governed Sparta. Last but not least there are the Pythagorean *acusmata*, which laid down rules for the tiniest minutiae of daily life.

Despite this extensive evidence for concern with ethics in early Greek civilization, however, most scholars have thought that it is only with Socrates that truly philosophical ethics arises (Kahn 1998: 48, “the founder of classical Greek moral theory,” Irwin 2007, Meyer 2008). To be philosophical an ethics needs to do more than just propose a way of life or deal with isolated issues of ethical import. Philosophical ethics should involve reflective and systematic inquiry into questions of conduct and value, inquiry that rigorously evaluates common assumptions about morality. Most of all, it should provide arguments for how human beings should act (Irwin 2007: 2; Meyer 2008: 1, 6). The Socratic elenchus clearly fits these criteria in that it undertakes a reflective and systematic evaluation of traditional moral views while proposing a way of life governed by the best argument (Plato, *Crito* 46b). There have been varying assessments of the extent to which the Presocratic thinkers listed above satisfied this sort of definition of philosophical ethics. Barnes, for example, argues that one may find a “consistent outlook” in the ethical fragments of Democritus but that “we shall look in vain for a systematic ethics” (1982: 531), whereas Annas argues that he is a eudaimonist and “one of the pioneers of the dominant form of ethical theory in the ancient world” (2002: 180). This is not the place to evaluate to what extent each of these earlier figures satisfies this definition of philosophical ethics. My goal is rather to examine in what ways, if any, the *Precepts* can be regarded as a philosophical treatment of ethics, although in doing so I will draw comparisons with other earlier and contemporary ethical thinkers, notably the Pythagorean *acusmata*, the sophists, Democritus and Socrates himself.

Before we examine to what extent the *Precepts* can be said to have made progress towards a philosophical treatment of ethics, it is important to see from what beginnings the *Precepts* originated. Aristoxenus did not entitle his work *The Precepts of Xenophilus*, and this is presumably because Xenophilus (if it is indeed he who formulated them) presented them as deriving from Pythagoras. Plato’s comments in *Republic* 10 cited above show that the people he knew called their way of life Pythagorean after Pythagoras. It would seem likely then that Xenophilus and other Pythagoreans of the fourth century saw their way of life as in some sense continuous with the way of life established by Pythagoras himself. Most scholars regard that way of life as embodied in the *acusmata* (Zhmud 2012a is the notable exception), many of which

were preserved by Aristotle. At first sight, however, the *acusmata* seem to have little in common with the *Precepts*. Certainly there is no sense in which the fourth-century Pythagoreans went through the *acusmata* systematically and updated them. However, as was noted above, the central principle of the *Precepts*, that human beings are by nature prone to excess, finds a close parallel in the *acusmata* where the response to the question “what is most truly said?” is “human beings are bad” (Iambl. *VP* 82). Close examination shows that other principles were taken over as well. Thus, the *acusma* which states that “labors are good but pleasures are bad in every way” is reflected in the *Precepts*’ edict that as a general rule we should never do anything that has pleasure as its aim (fr. 9). A large number of the *acusmata* are dietary taboos such as those prohibiting eating red mullet, animal hearts and, most famous of all, beans (Diog. Laert. 8.19). There are no such precise dietary prescriptions in the *Precepts* but, as we have seen above, diet was a crucial part of ethics for the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts*, since they thought that each food produces a distinct condition in us. Thus, these Pythagoreans thought that medicine in the form of dietetics was central to the good life. Again this seems to be a development of the *acusma* that in answer to the question “what is the wisest thing among human beings?” answers “medicine” (Iambl. *VP* 82). Iamblichus reports that the most extensive *acusmata* dealt with sacrifice and indeed a great number of them clearly developed from religious cult practices (Burkert 1972: 166–92). Again there is no reference to specific cult practices in the *Precepts*. Along with the lack of bizarre dietary restrictions the lack of religious taboos is one of the features that makes them so rational in tone. The *Precepts* do argue that human beings should believe in the gods and that they pay attention to us. The Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* might perhaps agree that human beings should engage in some traditional religious practices in order to reinforce the belief in the gods and to provide even more restrictions on our untrustworthy human nature, although there is no evidence that they recommended any specific cult practices.

These parallels certainly suggest that Burkert was right in supposing that the *Precepts* are “a modern substitute for the *acusmata*” (1972: 108 n. 62). They were composed by a Pythagorean or Pythagoreans who have lived through the fifth-century enlightenment and who brought the rational mindset of someone like the author of the Hippocratic treatise *On the Sacred Disease* (mid to late fifth century – Craik 2015: 195) to bear on

the Pythagorean way of life. Just as the author of that Hippocratic treatise tries to explain all disease without appeal to divine influence and rejects purifications, incantations and superstitions, such as the prohibition on wearing or lying on goat skins (*Sacred Disease* 2), so the authors of the *Precepts* have stripped away such features, common in the *acusmata* (e.g., see Hdt. 2.81 for the early Pythagorean ban on being buried in wool), from the Pythagorean way of life. So we have identified the starting point from which the *Precepts* set out and seen how they transform it. Beyond their rigorously rational approach, in what specific ways, if any, do they mark an advance towards philosophical ethics?

First, the *Precepts* do present a critique of materialistic values and put greatest value on the achievements of intellect. In fragment 9 they reject what is typically regarded as fine by the many, luxurious ways of satisfying the necessities of life: extravagant foods, clothes and housing. What is truly fine is instead said to be products of the intellect such as the sciences, customs and practices. Devising and following a rational code of life such as that expressed in the *Precepts* is one of the things we should value most. Since one of the central features of the *Precepts* is training in self-control, it seems that the virtue of temperance was also regarded as one of the things that are fine. None of this is as explicit as the distinction between the goods of the soul and the goods of body that is made by both Democritus (frs. 170–1) and Socrates (Plato *Apol.* 29d–e), but it is an important turn to internal rather than external goods. Indeed, even earlier than the *Precepts*, Xenophanes (DK B2) exalted the wisdom that was his in contrast to the bodily strength of the athlete, and Heraclitus thought that temperance was the greatest wisdom (DK B112). Thus, the *Precepts* occupy an intermediate stage between the brief comments of Xenophanes and Heraclitus and the clear-cut split between body and soul in Democritus and Socrates. They are certainly a large advance over the *acusmata* in that they self-consciously reject the material values of society and give something like a general definition of the sorts of things that ought to be valued rather than just providing isolated examples of what should be done.

An even more prominent advance in ethical thought over the *acusmata* has connections with sophistic thought of the late fifth century. One of the most prominent themes in the texts of the sophists is the variability of values. Thus, when asked what virtue is, Meno, in the dialogue of Plato named after him, is a good pupil of the sophist

Gorgias (cf. Aristotle *Pol.* 1260a27–33) when he answers that there is no one single thing virtue but rather what it is to be virtuous depends on the circumstances, e.g., on whether the person involved is a man, a woman, a slave or a child (Plato *Meno* 71e–72a). Similarly the treatise known as the *Dissoi Logoi* (*Contrasting Arguments*) repeatedly makes the point that the same thing can be good in some circumstances and bad in others (e.g., 1.3 “illness is bad for the sick but good for the doctors”). It has sometimes been thought that this line of thought was part of an attempt to subvert moral values, but that this need not be the case is shown by the fact that Aristotle, who is hardly out to subvert morals, agrees with Meno and Gorgias about the variability of virtues in contrast to Socrates’ claim that virtue should be the same in each case (Bett 2002: 240–1). The *Precepts* adopt a similar thesis concerning the variability of virtue. In fragment 10 there is no attempt to define “appropriateness” in our interactions with others in any general way. Instead what is appropriate and inappropriate is said to be distinguished by difference in age, status, family relationship and benefits conferred. Thus, it may be appropriate to be angry with someone who is our own age but never with our elders. The Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* thus reject the simplistic assumption of the *acusmata* that there is a set of rules that applies to all people in all circumstances. Instead the *Precepts* recognize that ethical judgments are complex and must take account of circumstances. As Barnes has suggested, Aristotle’s famous statement that we must not expect the same exactness in ethics as in some other subjects has a background in sophistic reflections on the variability of values (1982: 521). Indeed, Aristotle supports his assertion with a sophistic sounding observation: “it frequently occurs that good things have harmful consequences: people before now have been ruined by wealth” (*EN* 1094b17–19), i.e. what is good in one circumstance is not in another. It seems not unreasonable to see the *Precepts* as also forming part of the background for Aristotle’s thinking in this regard. It is also clear that this recognition of the variability of values did not lead the Pythagoreans to question the traditional moral values of society, since they state emphatically that people should abide by “the customs and laws of their fathers” (fr. 1). It is dangerous to abandon the values that are handed down to us by our forefathers, but it is important to recognize that the application of those values to our lives is not simple and needs to take into account the full complexity of the situation. As we have seen above, it is this complexity

that calls for the expertise emphasized in the *Precepts*. This is another connection to the sophists, who also presented themselves as experts who were accordingly worthy of a fee (Guthrie 1969: 35–40).

The *Precepts* also show a connection to a second central theme in sophistic texts: the contrast between nature and convention. To be sure there is no place in the *Precepts* where the nature/convention (*nomos/physis*) distinction is made explicitly and emphatically. Nonetheless, as we have seen above, they are deeply concerned with basic human nature and with societal restrictions on that nature. Their connection to the sophistic treatment of the *nomos/physis* distinction is best seen in comparison with the figure of Callicles in Plato's *Gorgias*. It is not clear that Callicles is a historical figure but the fragments of sophists such as Antiphon (DK B44) show that Plato was working with genuine sophistic conceptions (Bett 2002: 251). The Pythagoreans agree that human nature is such as Callicles describes it in Plato's *Gorgias*: 1) human beings by nature try to get a greater share than others (483d) and 2) human appetites by nature grow without limit (492a). However, they reject Callicles' claim that this natural human drive to avoid all restraint should be indulged and far from regarding the laws as enslaving our basic human nature treat them as our salvation. Their position shows some similarity to that of Protagoras in Plato's dialogue of that name. According to Protagoras human beings were on the point of extinction because, when they tried to band together in communities to defend themselves against wild animals, they inevitably wronged each other. They were only saved when Zeus gave justice and a sense of shame to human beings so that they could live together in communities (*Protag.* 322b–c). Thus, Protagoras' original human beings seem to have a nature like that described in the *Precepts*, in that they inevitably try to take more than their share and hence wrong others. However, Protagoras' argument that human survival depends on the formation of communities and that these cannot arise without a sense of justice finds no parallel in the *Precepts*. The *Precepts* have nothing explicit to say about the origin of human communities. Instead they appear to argue in terms of the salvation of the individual. Our unrestrained human nature will not allow us to accomplish anything fine or advantageous; we need the supervision of conventional rules in order to do so.

That the Pythagoreans were deeply concerned with the sophistic view of basic human nature, as seen in Protagoras and Antiphon as well as

Plato's Callicles, is confirmed by the confrontation between Polyarchus "the voluptuary" and the leading Pythagorean of the fourth century, Archytas, as portrayed in another work of Aristoxenus, the *Life of Archytas* (Huffman 2005 A9). Polyarchus adopts the same general stance as Callicles in arguing: 1) the lawgivers are at war with our natural drive to get more than our share (πλεονεξία), 2) traditional virtues such as temperance are "far removed from what is natural," and 3) nature calls for the active pursuit of bodily pleasures. Differences in detail show, however, that Polyarchus is a parallel figure to Callicles rather than derived from Plato's presentation of him (Huffman 2005: 307–17). Archytas' response to Polyarchus is preserved in Cicero (Huffman 2005: 323–37). Archytas agrees with the *Precepts* in highlighting the dangers of bodily pleasure, but his presentation and argument are clearly not derived from the *Precepts*. The *Precepts* emphasize that we should never act with pleasure as our goal (fr. 9), while Archytas stresses that, while intellect is the greatest gift given to human beings, nothing is so opposed to it as pleasure. He demonstrates this last point in a very original fashion by arguing that when we are in the throes of the most intense pleasure we are unable to reason at all. Archytas is almost an exact contemporary of Plato so his response to the sophistic attempt to lionize our natural tendency to excess could have been developed at essentially the same time as the *Precepts* or it could be several decades later when Archytas was ruling in Tarentum (sometime between 380 and 350 – Huffman 2005: 5–18). The important point is that the *Precepts* and the testimony for Archytas agree in showing that the Pythagoreans of the late fifth and first half of the fourth centuries engaged with late fifth-century attempts to glorify the natural human propensity to take more than one's share.

Several scholars have suggested that one of the unifying characteristics of the people commonly called sophists is that they adopt the stance of social scientists towards ethical phenomena. This attitude "involves detailed attention to what is actually valued, by whom and in what circumstances; and it involves a strong interest in the origins and functions of human institutions" (Bett 2002: 255). The individual sophists then vary widely in what conclusions they draw from this collection of evidence. The *Precepts* bear some of the traces of this interest in compiling lists of human behavior. Thus in fragment 9 they enumerate a number of things to which our superfluous desires lead us (luxurious

clothing, bedding, housing, dining services, drinking cups and servants). Again there are at least general lists of the wide range of food and drink of which human beings partake (an unlimited multitude of fruits and roots and meats of all sorts as well as all sorts of ways of preparing them). These long lists are not neutral presentations of human behavior but rather support for the basic Pythagorean position that desire is by nature unlimited (fr. 9).

One area in which the *Precepts* are a clear advance over not only the *acusmata* but also anything found in the sophistic texts or indeed in any ethical writing prior to Socrates, including Democritus, is their systematic nature. The *acusmata* are a wide-ranging collection of maxims and taboos derived from Greek cult and wisdom literature without any clear organizing principle or system. As Burkert puts it, they “developed from living custom, with all its complexity and paradox, rather than from clearly articulated doctrine” (1972: 180). Iamblichus presents a three-fold classification of them as either saying 1) what something is, 2) what is most something (e.g., what is most just? To sacrifice) or 3) what must be done (VP 82). This classification may go back to Aristotle (Burkert 1972: 166–73). Yet, this is surely Aristotle’s, or someone in the later tradition’s, own attempt to impose order on them rather than anything found in the Pythagorean tradition. The sophists focused on particular issues such as the origin of human society, the split between nature and convention and the variability of values, rather than presenting a systematic treatment of ethical issues or how to live our life. The numerous ethical fragments of Democritus are mostly short maxims, which betray no obvious organization. If we accept that he was a eudaimonist, then his ethics can be said to have the structure of eudaimonism with one goal (cheerfulness) structuring our moral life, but there is still no systematic treatment of a series of ethical concepts and issues. The *Precepts*, unlike the *acusmata* and much of Democritus, are not a collection of brief maxims. Instead they are a series of more extended treatments of concepts relevant to ethics. Thus there was a section of at least several pages discussing desire (frs. 3 and 9), which begins with a definition of desire, then distinguishes between natural and acquired desires, identifies three distinct types of mistaken desire and then illustrates the unlimited nature of desires through the wide range of food and drinks that humans pursue. There are, in fact, a series of extended sections dealing in a focused way with important ethical concepts: 1) human procreation

(frs. 4 and 9), 2) luck (fr. 7 – two kinds are distinguished), 3) what opinions should be followed (fr. 9), 4) appropriateness and inappropriateness in interactions with others (fr. 10) and 5) friendship (fr. 11). The systematization is not complete in that it is not clear if there was any overall structure that held these individual sections together. It is also not possible to be certain how much of the organization and system is due to Aristoxenus and how much he derives from his Pythagorean sources. Since the evidence given above suggests that the *Precepts* represent an attempt to reformulate the rules of the Pythagorean life for Greeks who have lived through the fifth-century Enlightenment, it seems plausible that the structure belongs to Xenophilus or whoever undertook this rethinking of the Pythagorean way of life. The *Precepts* do not follow the *acusmata* closely, so whoever devised them clearly needed to start from scratch in presenting the Pythagorean way of life and thus will have needed to devise a structure for that presentation.

The *Precepts* make progress in developing a reflective and systematic treatment of ethics that is characteristic of a philosophical treatment of ethics. Do they also take the crucial step of providing arguments for their ethical prescriptions? The evidence suggests that they do make limited use of argument and do not rely solely on assertion but do not fully embrace the use of argument as Socrates does. There are a couple of notable similarities to the Socratic approach. First, as we have seen above, they present something similar to Socrates' brief argument in the *Crito* that not all opinions should be accepted but only the opinions of the one who knows, the expert (fr. 9, cf. *Crito* 46c–47d). However, in contrast to the Socratic approach that proposes to always follow the argument that seems best, there is a tendency in the *Precepts* to value the expert rather than the arguments of the expert. Second, the *Precepts*, like Socrates, do base arguments on analogies from arts and crafts. These arguments are, in fact, a special case of the appeal to experts, since the practices of the experts in these arts are the model for what we should do in the case of human ethics. Thus, they appeal to agriculture and the rearing of animals as an argument for how human procreation and child-rearing ought to take place. In fragment 9 they argue that the precocious ought to be avoided in human procreation because "the precocious does not either in the case of plants or animals bear good fruit." Later in the same fragment there are similar arguments from the practices of dog-fanciers and bird-fanciers. Socrates frequently draws

just these sorts of comparisons with animal-rearing (see, e.g., *Apol.* 20a). There are also a few other brief arguments in the *Precepts* (e.g., see fragment 11 on why there should not be competition between friends).

In addition to these limited uses of argument there is one central argument deployed in the *Precepts*, although it is not stated in a very rigorous or totally explicit way. Some of the steps are more clearly expressed than others and not all of these parts are found together in the same text. In fact, it may be that there are really several related smaller arguments here rather than one big one, but it is useful to put all the ideas out together so that it is clear how they are connected.

- 1) Human beings are by nature insolent and excessive and beset with a complex and chaotic set of desires.
- 2) All human beings should accomplish fine and advantageous things and not degenerate into vice and badness.
- 3) In order to accomplish anything fine and advantageous human beings need order and self-control.
- 4) Since human nature as described in 1 is not self-controlled or ordered, it should never be allowed to do what it wants, since it will not do fine and advantageous things (by 3).
- 5) Given 1 and 3, human beings will not be able to accomplish anything fine or advantageous without supervision.
- 6) Thus lack of supervision (anarchy) is the greatest evil and it is crucial for human beings to have an authority impose order upon them.
- 7) To be most effective that authority must be of such power that we will not rebel against it.
- 8) The gods are thought to be an authority with such power, since they are supposed to rule the cosmos.
- 9) It is thus useful to believe that the gods exist and pay attention to us, since we will thus be ordered by divine authority.
- 10) Given 1, human beings should seek as much supervision as possible so that they should also subordinate themselves to their parents and the laws. Presumably the Pythagorean way of life as governed by the *Pythagorean Precepts* provides a further source of supervision.

Premises 1, 3 and 8 are evidently based on the Pythagoreans' observations of human life as "social scientists." Premise 2 is an unargued assumption that is in essence an assertion of the intrinsic value of

traditional virtue, of what is fine, as a goal alongside, but prior to, what is advantageous. The other statements are derived from these premises. One interesting unstated assumption here is that individual human reason in itself will not be enough to establish self-control. The Pythagoreans thus clearly reject the Socratic thesis that knowledge is sufficient for virtue. The Pythagoreans value the knowledge of the expert but think that it is crucial that knowledge be supported by an elaborate system of supervision that includes the gods, parents, elders, the laws of the state and the precepts that govern the Pythagorean way of life.

Thus there is some argumentation in the *Precepts* but there is nothing like the value assigned to argument found in the Socratic elenchus nor the attendant Socratic disavowal of knowledge, which is based on the supposition that any supposed knowledge is in principle always open to further testing by the elenchus. The *Precepts* are so committed to the value of supervision that they advocate accepting “the customs and laws of their fathers, even if they should be somewhat worse than those of others are” (frs. 1 and 8). Thus, the Pythagoreans clearly did not think it was valuable to be constantly putting accepted views to the test of the elenchus. Indeed, of the four Pythagorean age groups it is only the old men who are supposed to be engaged in reflection. The clear implication is that the other three groups (children, young men and men) should not question the laws of society but simply learn and follow them (fr. 2). Moreover, while the *Precepts* agree with Socrates that we should not use popular opinion as our guide, they do not embrace Socrates’ mission of putting all the authority figures embraced by Greek society to the test. The Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* presumably did not think that all the authority figures thrown up by society should be accepted but rather that we should particularly follow those who have lived noble lives (i.e. leading Pythagoreans). Nonetheless, the emphasis is clearly on accepting authority rather than being sceptical of it.

There are other marked differences from the Platonic Socrates. The Pythagoreans do show some interest in definition, an interest that evidently went back to Pythagoras himself (see the definitions in the *acusmata* and Arist. (?) *MM* 1.1.6). But their interest in definition is quite different from what we find in the Socrates portrayed by Plato. That Socrates, which may not be the historical Socrates, searches for definitions of virtues such as piety or courage ostensibly so that we can use those definitions as a guide to action. We want to be able to define piety

since otherwise we cannot act piously. There is no indication that definitions played this role for the Pythagoreans. As we have noted above no definitions of the virtues are given. The definition of desire in fragments 3 and 9 is part of a classification of types of desires and mistaken desires that can help us to understand the role that desire plays in our life but does not provide any direct guide to virtuous action. Since they have little to say about the virtues it is clear that the Pythagoreans present nothing like the doctrine of the unity of virtues found in the Platonic Socrates. Nor is there any trace of the Socratic denial of *akrasia*.

These differences from and lack of engagement with the central ideas of both the Socrates of the *Apology* and the Socrates of the early Platonic dialogues show again that the *Precepts* were not developed after Plato's presentation of his master had become widely available. It still is quite possible that Pythagoreans such as Xenophilus knew of Socrates and admired many aspects of his life. Certainly the setting of the *Phaedo* in Phlius with the Pythagorean Echecrates as the central auditor of Phaedo's account of Socrates' last day shows that Plato thought that the Pythagoreans greatly admired Socrates. But that admiration is likely to have been based on Socrates' self-controlled way of life rather than the set of Socratic doctrines that are presented by Plato.

The *Precepts* are thus a radical advance towards a philosophical ethics over the earlier Pythagorean *acusmata*. They are more systematic, more reflective and make a greater use of argument. Moreover, they also surpass the efforts in ethics of any of the sophists or Presocratics prior to Democritus in these respects. On the other hand, they do not constitute a treatise in ethical theory *per se*. They set out rules that are supposed to govern our life rather than providing a complete account of the theoretical foundations of that life. Nor can they be said to have anticipated the founding of philosophical ethics by Socrates. They do not carry out a rigorous evaluation of common assumptions about morality, and they do not fully embrace rational argument as the ultimate arbiter in ethical matters. In the end the *Precepts* occupy an anomalous position in Greek ethics. Julia Annas has argued that "ancient ethics . . . is not based on the idea that morality is essentially punitive or corrective . . . its leading notions are not those of obligation, duty and rule-following" (1993: 4). The *Pythagorean Precepts* are an exception to this rule. The Pythagoreans very much saw human beings as in need of correction

because of their basically hubristic nature (fr. 8), and here the most important goal in action is the obligation to do what is fine and seemly, which seems to mean to follow the rules established by society.

The *Precepts* are best understood as a parallel development to the ethics of Democritus and Socrates. They are more systematic than Democritus' ethical maxims but do not make some crucial distinctions as clearly as Democritus does (e.g., the distinction between goods of the body and goods of the soul) or identify a central goal for all our actions as Democritus does. They have engaged with the arguments of the sophists as did Socrates and have been influenced by them, particularly in coming to recognize the complexity of the circumstances in which ethical decisions are made. A number of their specific suggestions about how to live our lives are similar to and may have influenced ideas of Plato and Aristotle. For all their rationality, however, the *Precepts* crucially differ from Socrates and most Greek philosophy after him in putting the emphasis on the value of authority and expertise rather than on the best argument. The emphasis on expertise and the appeal to an authority figure who has that expertise to guide our life is, of course, not surprising in Pythagoreanism, which is ultimately based on the authority of the master, Pythagoras.

Part II

Fragments with Translation and Commentary

11 | *The Pythagorean Precepts: A Reconstructed Text in English*

Introduction

In the body of the commentary the goal has been to set out clearly the evidence for the *Pythagorean Precepts*. This required that I present all fragments of the *Precepts* in their original contexts even in the cases where there is significant overlap in content between what is preserved in Iamblichus and what is preserved in Stobaeus (e.g., the overlap between fragments 1 and 2 from Stobaeus and fragment 8 from Iamblichus). Without this sort of presentation the discussion of the relationship between what is preserved in Iamblichus and what is preserved in Stobaeus would be unintelligible. The difficulty with this presentation of the evidence is that it does not show what the actual text of the *Precepts* may have looked like. Accordingly, it is desirable to provide a reconstruction of the text of the *Precepts* based on the arguments about the fragments developed in the commentary. This allows the reader to read straight through the text of the *Precepts* in English and gain an idea of what the impact of the original text might have been. In order to save space I will provide just an English translation of this reconstructed text.

Several points need to be made about the evidence for reconstructing the *Precepts*:

1) Neither of the two sources for the fragments, Iamblichus and Stobaeus, makes any explicit statement about the ordering of the fragments. Neither makes any reference to any fragment being at the beginning or the end of the work. Nor does either identify one fragment as preceding or following another. Both of these authors arrange the fragments according to the overall structure of their own works, including the fragments in appropriate chapters or headings of those works (e.g., fragment 10 appears in Chapter 30 of Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, which is devoted to the topic of justice; fragment 7 comes from Stobaeus 1.6, which is devoted to luck) without giving us any idea as to what the structure of the *Precepts* itself was like.

2) None of the fragments indicate by their structure or rhetoric that they are the beginning or end of the treatise. Moreover, while similar ideas appear in more than one fragment, no fragment makes any cross-reference to any other fragment.

3) Thus, there is neither explicit external nor internal evidence for the ordering of the fragments. This might suggest that no such order should be provided. Indeed it appears as if the individual precepts were relatively self-contained, brief treatments of topics such as desire or luck. In this respect, as in others, they may have been a development of the earlier *acusmata*, which were much briefer rules or gnomic sayings (e.g., “The most just thing is to sacrifice” or “One ought not to drive out one’s own wife, for she is a suppliant,” see Iambl. *VP* 82–5 and Burkert 1972: 166–92). It would appear that there was no specific ordering for the *acusmata* so it might be that the same is true of the longer and more developed precepts that Aristoxenus collected. We know of no written form of the precepts except that provided by Aristoxenus so it may well be that they were primarily transmitted orally and in no fixed order until Aristoxenus wrote them down.

4) However, one of the central features of the ethical system of the *Precepts* is a strong emphasis on order (e.g., frs. 2 and 8). Moreover, one of the precepts stresses the importance of identifying first principles (fr. 10). In light of this it seems very unlikely Aristoxenus would have presented the *Precepts* in a random order and doubtful that the Pythagoreans themselves thought them of equal weight. It is, for example, hard to believe that a precept such as fragment 6, which has a relatively narrow focus, urging that learning be willing, would have begun Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts* rather than fragment 8, which states a fundamental point about human nature and discusses the proper attitude to the gods.

5) It is crucial, however, to recognize that the nature of the treatise and the nature of the evidence available to us make it impossible to arrive at a reconstruction that is anything more than a plausible conjecture. Other, perhaps equally likely, conjectures are possible. The only previous detailed attempt to reconstruct the order of the fragments is that of Mewaldt (1904: 57, cf. 9–21). My account agrees with him in beginning with Iamblichus *VP* 174 (fr. 8) and ending with the precept on luck from

Stobaeus (fr. 7). Wehrli, who does not in general comment on his ordering of the fragments, also begins and ends at the same place and does suggest that Stobaeus 4.1.49 (fr. 2 = fr. 35 W) followed VP 174 ff., since it has narrower application (1967: 59). Neither DK (58D) nor Delatte (1922a: 42–56) propose any specific ordering of the fragments of the *Precepts*. The rest of Mewaldt's ordering is undercut by his belief that it is Iamblichus' text that is likely to be more reliable and that Stobaeus made radical changes in the excerpts he quoted. This belief is based on his judgment that the ordering in Iamblichus is more coherent. However, judgments about relative coherence are subjective and should only be relied on when there is no other evidence. Mewaldt's reliance on the ordering of Iamblichus goes entirely contrary to the evidence for the practice of Iamblichus and Stobaeus in cases where we can check their work against complete surviving texts (see [Chapter 5](#) of the Introduction).

6) In cases where Stobaeus and Iamblichus present different texts of the same precept I have in general followed Stobaeus in light of the analysis of the working methods of these two authors, which I have provided in the Introduction. Stobaeus is an excerptor and thus intervenes very little in the text, whereas Iamblichus and the source that he uses for the *Precepts* are not simply providing excerpts but rather adapting material from the *Precepts* to their own account of Pythagoreanism and thus feel free to rearrange and elaborate on the material found in the *Precepts*. Of course, there are inevitably instances where the text in Stobaeus has become corrupted either because of mistakes on Stobaeus' part or because of mistakes arising in the transmission of the text. In these cases Iamblichus' text allows us to correct Stobaeus but these instances are relatively rare.

7) In the case of material preserved solely in Iamblichus, it is very likely that the text has been somewhat rewritten just as it has in the cases where we can check the parallel text preserved in Stobaeus (see [Chapter 5](#) in the Introduction). It is impossible to be certain where such rewriting occurs but I have put in brackets material that seems most likely to have been added by Iamblichus given his practice in cases where his text can be checked with Stobaeus. The bracketed material is small in amount and does not materially affect the central theses of the *Precepts*.

8) After taking into account the evidence for the practices of Stobaeus and Iamblichus it is necessary to use criteria for ordering that have plausibility but that are far from certain. The main approach in the following reconstruction is simply to present what appear to be the most fundamental precepts with the broadest application earlier and the narrower more specific precepts later. This leads to the same beginning fragment as Mewaldt and Wehrli (fr. 8). Within this general structure, precepts that deal with similar topics are grouped together. Thus the precept on sex follows the precept on desire in general, the precept on friendship follows the more general precept on interactions with others, and the precepts on the sciences are grouped together. The precept on luck comes at the end (as it does in both Mewaldt and Wehrli), even though it has a general scope, because it explains why following all the earlier precepts or indeed failing to follow them does not always determine our success in life.

Reconstructed Text in English

Iamblichus, VP 174–6 (corrected from Stobaeus 4.25.45) = fr. 8

They supposed that it was useful to regard the divine as existing and so disposed towards the human race as to oversee it and not to neglect it. For we are in need of the sort of supervision against which we will not dare to rebel in any way. Such is the supervision that is brought into being by the divine, if the divine is such as to be worthy to rule the whole. For they said that an animal is by nature insolent and excessive and shows a complex variety in its impulses, desires, and the rest of its emotions. Therefore it is in need of the sort of superior authority and threats from which self-control and order arise. They thought it necessary for each person to be conscious of the complex variety of his nature and to never forget piety and service towards the divine but always to keep in the front of his thoughts that it pays attention to and closely watches human conduct. But after what belongs to gods and the divine to pay most attention to parents and laws not in a counterfeit way but conforming oneself to these things out of conviction. They approved abiding by the customs and laws of their fathers, even if they should be somewhat worse than those of others are. For to easily turn away from the existing laws and to become at home with innovation is in no way advantageous or salutary.

Stobaeus, 4.1.49 = fr. 2

As a general rule, they thought that it was necessary to suppose that there is no greater evil than anarchy, for it is not natural for human beings to be saved, if there is no one supervising them. Concerning rulers and ruled they thought as follows: they asserted that rulers must not only be knowledgeable but also love humanity, and that the ruled must not only be obedient but also love the rulers. They thought that it was necessary to show concern for every age group, that children be given practice in letters and the other subjects, that young men be trained in the customs and laws of the city, and that men should devote themselves to actions and service on behalf of the public. The old men, they supposed, should be engaged in reflection, courts and giving counsel with all of their knowledge, so that neither would children act like infants, nor young men act like children, nor men act like young men, nor old men become senile. They said that it was necessary, right from childhood, even to have a diet that is well ordered, teaching that order and due proportion are fine and advantageous, but disorder and lack of due proportion are shameful and disadvantageous.

Iamblichus, VP 203–4 = fr. 9 (in part)

They often asked and raised a difficulty as to why we accustom children to these things. For if none of these things is useful once we have reached manhood, it is pointless to accustom them to such order as children. [The story is the same about the other habits.] At least this is not seen to happen in the case of the other animals that are trained by men, but right from the beginning the puppy and the colt learn and are made accustomed to those things which they will have to do when they are grown.

Iamblichus, VP 200–3 = fr. 9 (in part)

Concerning opinion they said the following: it is, on the one hand, foolish to heed every opinion and the opinion of every person, and especially to heed the opinion that arises among the many. For to form opinions and suppositions well belongs to few people. [For it is clear that those with knowledge do this, but these are few. So that it is clear that such an ability would not extend to the many.] On the other hand it is also foolish to despise every supposition and opinion [, for one with this disposition will turn out to be ignorant and incorrigible]. It is necessary for the one without knowledge to learn that of which he happens to be ignorant and not to know, and for the one who is learning to heed the

supposition and opinion of the one who knows and is able to teach. As a general rule, they said it was necessary that those of the young who were going to be saved pay attention to the suppositions and opinions of their elders and of those who have lived nobly.

In the entirety of human life certain ages have been “carved up” (for they did indeed speak thus), which not just any man can connect to one another. For these ages are impeded by one another, if someone does not bring the person up nobly and correctly from birth. It is necessary then that, if the training of the child is noble, temperate and manly, a great part of this be transmitted to the age of the young man, and in the same way also, if both the care and also the training of the young man are noble, temperate and manly, a great part of this be transmitted to the age of the man, since what happens, in the case of the many at least, is strange and ridiculous. For they think that as children they should be well ordered and temperate and keep away from everything that is thought to be vulgar and unseemly, but once they have become young men they are let alone, among the many at least, to do whatever they want. But generally into this age there flow together both kinds of faults. For young men make both childish errors and also those that belong to a man, and many of them. For it is most characteristic of the age of childhood to avoid practically the whole class of things that are serious and orderly and to pursue the class of things that involve play, lack of restraint and childish insolence. From this age then such a condition extends into the following age. But the class of strong desires, and in the same way also the class of desires that are covetous of honor, and likewise the remaining impulses and conditions which belong to the class of what is difficult and turbulent, enter into the age of young men from the age of men. Wherefore of all ages this needs the most care. As a general rule, they said that a human being must never be let alone to do what he wishes, but that there should always be some supervision, i.e. a rule that is both lawful and seemly [, to which each of the citizens will be subject]. For an animal that is let alone and neglected quickly degenerates into vice and badness.

Iamblichus, VP 204 = fr. 9 (in part)

As a general rule, they advised [those who met with them and became their associates] to beware of pleasure [above all things]. For nothing so trips us up nor throws us into error as this feeling. And as a general rule,

[as it seems, they strove] never to do anything that had pleasure as the aim, for this aim is for the most part unseemly and harmful. But most of all with an eye to what is noble and seemly to do whatever should be done, and secondarily with an eye to what is advantageous and beneficial, and these things require no ordinary judgment.

Stobaeus, 3.10.66 = fr. 3

Concerning desire they said the following. This experience is complex in its variety and has the most forms. Some desires are acquired and provided from without, but others are born with us. Desire itself is a certain motion of the soul towards [something], an impulse and longing for filling or for presence of sensation, or for emptying and for absence and not to perceive. There are three most well-known kinds of mistaken and bad desire: shamelessness, lack of proportion and inappropriateness. For either desire is of itself shameful, vulgar, and servile or, while this is not the case, it is stronger and lasts longer than is proper, or thirdly, in addition to these, it occurs when it should not and is directed at things to which it should not be directed.

Iamblichus, VP 205–8 = fr. 9 (in part)

Wherefore indeed this experience is in need of the greatest care, guarding and no ordinary training. For, when the body is empty, it is natural to desire food, and again when it has been filled to desire the appropriate emptying is also natural. But to desire superfluous food or superfluous and luxurious clothing and bedding or superfluous, costly and elaborate housing, is acquired. The same account applies also to dining services and drinking cups, servants, and creatures raised for food. (206) And as a general rule, [of human experiences it is pretty much the case that] this most of all is the sort never to stop but to advance without limit. Wherefore, straight from youth those that spring up must be taken care of so that they desire the things they should and flee from vain and superfluous desires, being undisturbed by and pure of such desires and despising both those who are in themselves worthy to be despised and also those who are bound up in desires. And especially to be detected are the vain, harmful, superfluous, and insolent desires that arise among those living in power. For there is nothing so strange that the soul of such children, men and women does not eagerly pursue it. (207) As a general rule, the human race is most varied in the range of its desires. A clear sign of this is the variety of food and drink. For there is an unlimited

multitude of fruits, and an unlimited multitude of roots, which the human race employs. Moreover, it engages in eating meats of all sorts and it is difficult to find any animal of land, air or water of which it does not taste. And all sorts of ways of preparing these have been contrived and all sorts of mixtures of flavors. Therefore the human tribe understandably displays manifold forms of madness as a result of the disturbance of the soul. (208) For indeed each of the items of food and drink is responsible for a distinct condition. However, human beings notice things that immediately become responsible for great alteration, such as wine, because, up to a point, the more one drinks the more cheerful it makes one, but thereafter more mad and more shameless. [But other things that do not manifest such power they do not perceive. But everything that is eaten or drunk is responsible for a distinct condition.] Wherefore indeed it is a characteristic of great skill to detect and notice what sort of and how many things should be employed for nourishment. [This knowledge belonged from the beginning to Apollo and Paion but later to Asclepius and his followers.]

Stobaeus, 4.37.4 = fr. 4 + Iamblichus, VP 209 = fr. 9 (in part)

Concerning generation of children they said the following. As a general rule, <they thought that it was necessary> to guard against what is called “precocious,” for neither in the case of plants nor of animals does the precocious bear good fruit, but they need to be prepared in advance of bearing fruit for some time, in which time their bodies, having gained full strength and having reached maturity, become able to provide both seeds and fruits. It is necessary then to raise both the boys and the girls in toils, exercises and appropriate tests of endurance, supplying food that is in harmony with a life that is devoted to toil, temperance and patient endurance [VP 209]. There are many things in life in which late-learning is better, as is the case also with the business of engaging in sex. It is necessary, then, that they be brought up so busy with training while still children, that not only do they not seek, but, if possible, that they not even know of such intercourse until they are twenty. Whenever the children have reached even this age, they must rarely engage in sex. For this contributes considerably to the good condition both of those who are begetting and of those who are going to be begotten. They said also that one should not associate with women for reproduction when full of food and strong drink. For they did not think that from a

temperament that is base and discordant and disordered well-proportioned and beautiful things arise, but things that are not at all good.

Iamblichus, VP 210 = fr. 9 (in part)

They also praised the following sorts of customs that existed before their time in the Greek cities: not to have intercourse with mothers, nor a daughter, nor a sister, nor in a temple, nor in public. For it is fine and advantageous that as many hindrances to this activity as possible arise. But they used to suppose that it was necessary to strip away both engenderings that are contrary to nature and also those that arise by violence or excess and to leave alone the engenderings, among those which arise according to nature and with temperance, which arise for the purpose of temperate and lawful production of children.

Iamblichus, VP 211 = fr. 9 (in part)

And they supposed that it was necessary that those producing children give great forethought for their future offspring. The first and greatest precaution is that one bring oneself to the production of children having lived and still living in a temperate and healthy way.

Iamblichus, VP 212–13 = fr. 9 (in part)

As a general rule, they thought that it was in every way characteristic of a frivolous and improvident person that someone be about to produce life [and lead it to come to be and exist,] and that this person not take forethought with all seriousness [as to how the arrival into being and life of those who are generated will be as fine as possible]. But dog-fanciers manage the raising of puppies in all seriousness, so that puppies turn out of suitable temperament, being born from the right parents, at the right time, when the parents are in the right condition. (213) The same is also true of bird-fanciers. And it is also clear that the rest of those who devote themselves to the proper breeding of animals show all seriousness that their procreation not come about without plan. But men pay no attention to their own offspring, but procreate without plan and haphazardly, doing it altogether off-hand and afterwards rear and educate them with total neglect. For this is the most powerful and the clearest cause of the vice and badness of most men. For the production of children among the many is something brutish and without purpose.

Iamblichus, VP 180–2 = fr. 10 (in part)

For, with regard to interactions with others there is appropriateness and inappropriateness, and they are distinguished by difference in age, in status, in family relationship and in benefits conferred [, and in any other difference of this sort between people]. For there is a certain form of interaction that seems not to be inappropriate for the young in respect to the young but is inappropriate with respect to an elder. For, not every form of anger or threat or boldness is inappropriate, but the young must be on guard against all such behavior as inappropriate toward their elders. There is also a similar account concerning reputation; for towards a man who has a deserved reputation for nobility it is neither seemly nor appropriate to employ either great frankness or the rest of the things just mentioned. [Remarks similar to these were also made about interactions with parents, and in the same way about interactions with benefactors.] The practice of what is appropriate is something complex and has many forms. For even of those who become angry and enraged, some do so appropriately and others inappropriately. And again of those yearning for, desiring, and eagerly pursuing something, appropriateness accompanies some and inappropriateness others. [And the same account applies to other emotions, activities, dispositions, interactions and encounters.] Up to a point what is appropriate is teachable [and not without method and admits of systematic treatment, but these characteristics do not apply to it universally and without qualification]. It is pretty much the following sorts of things that are in conformity with and accompany the nature of the appropriate: what is called the timely, the suitable and the fitting [and if there happens to be anything else of the same kind].

Iamblichus, VP 101–2 = 230–3 = fr. 11

For they advised that competition and rivalry be removed from true friendship, preferably from all friendship, if possible, but, if not, at least from friendship with family friends and in general from friendship towards elders and in the same way also from friendship towards benefactors. For to engage in intense competition and rivalry with such people, since anger or some other such emotion enters in, does not preserve the existing friendship. But they said that as few as possible wounds and ulcerations should arise in friendships. This comes about, if both know how to yield and to control their anger, or rather the younger

and the one who occupies whichever of the ranks that have been mentioned. They thought that it was necessary for corrections and admonitions, which those men called “re-tunings,” to be made by elders to the young with much tact and caution, and that solicitude and propriety be very manifest in those who give admonitions, for in this way admonition is both decorous and beneficial. Trust should never be removed from friendship neither in joking nor in earnest. For it is not easy for the existing friendship to persist still in a healthy state, once deceit has crept into the character of those claiming to be friends. A friendship is not to be renounced on account of misfortune or any of the other disabilities that befall us in life, but renunciation of a friend and a friendship is only acceptable if it comes about on account of great [and incorrigible] vice. One must never willingly initiate enmity towards those who are not totally bad, but having initiated it one must be nobly steadfast and fight through to the end, if the character of the one disputing with you does not change and a spirit of reconciliation does not arise. One must not fight with words but with deeds. Being an enemy is acceptable to human and divine law, if one fights as a human being with a human being. Never, as far as possible, be responsible for a dispute, but as much as possible take precautions that a dispute not begin. They said that, in a friendship that was going to be true, as many things as possible should be clearly defined and in accordance with customary practice and that these things should be well judged and not without plan. Indeed each of these things should be established as a habit, so that neither does any association arise negligently or without plan, but with reverence, consideration and proper order, nor is any emotion aroused without plan, casually and mistakenly. [For example desire or anger. The same account also applies to the remaining emotions and dispositions.]

Iamblichus, VP 182–3 = fr. 10 (in part)

And they declared that in everything a starting point is something of highest value, alike in sciences and practices and in generation and again in a household and a city and in a military camp [and all such organizations]. But the nature of the starting point is difficult to see [and detect in all the things that have been mentioned]. For, in the case of the sciences, it does not belong to just any intellect, after having looked at the parts of the investigation, to understand and distinguish well what sort of thing is a starting point of these things. But it makes a great difference and nearly

everything is at risk, if the starting point has not been grasped correctly. For, generally speaking, nothing of the things that follow after will still be sound if the true starting point is not known. [The same account also applies to the other sort of starting point.] For neither a household nor a city would ever be well managed, if one who is truly ruler and master has not willingly initiated the rule and authority. For supervision should arise when both desire it, both the ruler and the ruled alike, just as they also said it was necessary that learning that arises correctly comes about willingly, when both wish it, the teacher and the learner. For if ever either one of those mentioned resists, the appointed task would not duly reach its end.

Stobaeus, 2.31.119 = fr. 6

They said also that all learning both of sciences and of arts that was willing was both correct and also attained its end, but when unwilling was both inferior and did not attain its end.

Stobaeus, 3.1.101 = fr. 5

They said that true love of what is beautiful and fine is found in our pursuits and in the sciences. For to prize and love customs and pursuits that are fine, just as also those kinds of sciences and practices which are fine and seemly, is truly to be lovers of what is beautiful and fine, but that which is called love of the beautiful and fine by the many, such as that which arises with regard to things that are necessary and useful for life, lies, presumably, as the spoils of the true love of what is beautiful and fine.

Stobaeus, 1.6.18 = fr. 7

Concerning luck they said the following: A part of it is divine, for some inspiration arises from the divine for some people, either for the better or for the worse, and it is clearly in accordance with precisely this that some are lucky and some are unlucky. This is most clearly seen when those who do something with no prior consideration and without plan are often successful, while those who do something after planning in advance and taking correct precautions fail. But there is also another kind of luck, in accordance with which some people are born gifted and with the ability to hit the mark, but others are born dull and with the opposite nature. Of these the ones hit the mark in whatever they undertake, but the others fail to obtain their object, since their thought is never

borne towards the target but is always confused. This bad luck is inborn and not imposed from outside.

Subsidiary Precepts (These are not certain to have come from the *Precepts*. Some may come from other works of Aristoxenus on the Pythagoreans but adopt the style of the *Precepts*. See appendices 1–3.)

Iamblichus, VP 96 = Subsidiary Precept 1

For they thought that they should not meet with anyone until they had settled down their own soul and put their thoughts in order and that such quiet was suited to the settling of their thoughts. For, they had supposed that it was disturbing to be pushed into crowds, immediately after having arisen.

Iamblichus, VP 100 = Subsidiary Precept 2

They did not approve of being devoted to hunting, nor even of making use of such exercise.

Iamblichus, VP 164 = Subsidiary Precept 3

They thought that it was necessary to hold fast and preserve in the memory everything that was taught and advised, and to use contrivance in teaching and lectures up to the point where that (part of us) which learns and preserves in memory is able to receive them, for it is that (part) by which it is necessary to understand a maxim and in which it is necessary to preserve it.

Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 10.9.2–4 = Subsidiary Precept 4

For, as a general rule, they supposed that all types of sexual activities were harmful and they thought that continual practice of them was thoroughly productive of weakness and ruin.

12 | Fragment 1: Obedience to Parents and the Laws (34 W)

Stobaeus, *Eclogae* 4.25.45 [ὅτι χρή τοὺς γονεῖς τῆς καθηκούσης τιμῆς καταξιοῦσθαι παρὰ τῶν τέκνων, καὶ εἰ ἐν ἅπασιν αὐτοῖς πειστέον]

Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων

μετὰ τὸ θεῖον καὶ δαιμόνιον πλεῖστον ποιεῖσθαι λόγον γονέων τε 1
καὶ νόμων, μὴ πλαστῶς, ἀλλὰ πεπιστευμένως ἑαυτὸν πρὸς 2
ταῦτα παρασκευάζοντα. τὸ μένειν <ἐν> τοῖς πατρίοις ἔθεσί τε 3
καὶ νόμοις ἐδοκίμαζον, εἰ καὶ μικρῶ χείρω τῶν ἐτέρων εἴη. 4

1 μετὰ] καὶ μετὰ A λόγον γονέων] M A² Tr. λόγον νέων S A¹
3 μένειν <ἐν>] Hense, cf. Iambl. VP 176 μένειν SMA ἐμμένειν Gesn.¹ <δ>
ἐμμένειν Elter πατρίοις] πατρώοις A 4 μικρῶ] codd. μακρῶ
Wehrli χείρω] S M χείρων A

Translation

From the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus:

After what belongs to the gods and the divine [they thought it was necessary (see fr. 8)] to pay most attention to parents and laws, not in a counterfeit way but conforming oneself to these things out of conviction. They approved abiding by the customs and laws of their fathers, even if they should be somewhat worse than those of others are.

Overview of the Argument

This fragment makes three basic points: 1) Our attention should first of all be given to the divine but after the divine we should pay most attention to our parents and the laws. 2) The attention that we render to our parents and the laws should be based on conviction and not be counterfeit. 3) We should abide by the customs and laws of our fathers,

even if they are somewhat worse than those of other people. For an example of traditional customs that the Pythagoreans reaffirm see their remarks on incest, sex in public and sex in temples in lines 140–3 of fragment 9 and my commentary on those lines.

Detailed Commentary

This fragment forms part of the longer fragment 8 as preserved by Iamblichus (see the discussion of the extent of fr. 8). Accordingly, commentary is provided in the commentary on fragment 8.

13 | Fragment 2: The Importance of Order and Supervision for Every Age of Life (35 W)

Stobaeus, *Eclogae* 4.1.49 [περὶ πολιτείας]

Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων·

καθόλου δὲ ᾧοντο δεῖν ὑπολαμβάνειν μηδὲν εἶναι μείζον κακὸν 1
ἀναρχίας, οὐ γὰρ πεφυκέναι τὸν ἄνθρωπον διασῶζεσθαι 2
μηδενὸς ἐπιστατοῦντος. περὶ δὲ ἀρχόντων καὶ ἀρχομένων 3
οὕτως ἐφρόνουν, τοὺς μὲν γὰρ ἀρχοντας ἔφασκον οὐ μόνον 4
ἐπιστήμονας ἀλλὰ καὶ φιланθρώπους δεῖν εἶναι, καὶ τοὺς 5
ἀρχομένους οὐ μόνον πειθηνίους, ἀλλὰ καὶ φιλάρχοντας. 6
ἐπιμελητέον δὲ πάσης ἡλικίας ἡγοῦντο, καὶ τοὺς μὲν παῖδας ἐν 7
γράμμασι καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις μαθήμασιν ἀσκεῖσθαι, τοὺς δὲ 8
νεανίσκους τοῖς τῆς πόλεως ἔθεσί τε καὶ νόμοις γυμνάζεσθαι, 9
τοὺς δὲ ἄνδρας ταῖς πράξεσί τε καὶ δημοσίαις λειτουργίαις 10
προσέχειν. τοὺς δὲ πρεσβύτας ἐνθυμήσεσι καὶ κριτηρίοις καὶ 11
συμβουλίαις δεῖν ἐναναστρέφεσθαι μετὰ πάσης ἐπιστήμης 12
ὑπελάμβανον, ὅπως μήτε οἱ παῖδες νηπιάζοιεν, μήτε οἱ 13
νεανίσκοι παιδαριεύοιντο, μήτε οἱ ἄνδρες νεανιεύοιντο μήτε οἱ 14
γέροντες παραφρονοῖεν. δεῖν δὲ ἔφασκον εὐθύς ἐκ παίδων καὶ 15
τὴν τροφήν τεταγμένως προσφέρεισθαι, διδάσκοντες ὥς ἡ μὲν 16
τάξις καὶ συμμετρία καλὰ καὶ σύμφορα, ἡ δ' ἀταξία καὶ 17
ἀσυμμετρία αἰσχρά τε καὶ ἀσύμφορα. 18

9 γυμνάζεσθαι] codd. ἐγγυμνάζεσθαι Meineke 14 οἱ ἄνδρες]
Br. ἄνδρες SMA 16 διδάσκοντες] Gesner διδάσκουσιν
SMBr διδάσκουσα A καὶ διδάσκουσιν Elter ᾧ, διδάσκουσιν Diels

Translation

From the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus

As a general rule, they thought that it was necessary to suppose that there is no greater evil than anarchy, for it is not natural for human

beings to be saved, if there is no one supervising them. Concerning rulers and ruled they thought as follows: they asserted that rulers must not only be knowledgeable but also love humanity, and that the ruled must not only be obedient but also love the rulers. They thought that it was necessary to show concern for every age group, that children be given practice in letters and the other subjects, that young men be trained in the customs and laws of the city, and that men should devote themselves to actions and service on behalf of the public. The old men, they supposed, should be engaged in reflection, courts and giving counsel with all of their knowledge, so that neither would children act like infants, nor young men act like children, nor men act like young men, nor old men become senile. They said that it was necessary, right from childhood, even to have a diet that is well ordered, teaching that order and due proportion are fine and advantageous, but disorder and lack of due proportion are shameful and disadvantageous.

Overview of the Argument

The first sentence contains the basic precept that governs the entire passage, i.e. that there is no greater evil than anarchy. This precept is in turn based on one of the fundamental Pythagorean insights into human life: human beings are not of such a nature as to be saved unless some authority is set over them. A human being is “saved” not by merely being kept alive but rather by the preservation of his or her ability to live a good life (see the commentary on διασώζεσθαι in line 2). A good life, in turn, is one characterized by temperance and order. The next sentence specifies the proper nature of all relationships of authority: rulers should not just be knowledgeable but also love humanity and the ruled should not merely be obedient but should also love the rulers. The Pythagoreans are here emphasizing what can be seen in other fragments as well, that proper rule involves the willingness of both parties, a willingness that is based on persuasion that it is best to forego narrow self-interest (see the second part of fr. 10 and the commentary *ad loc.*). Other fragments also make clear that rule is to be understood very widely here so that it includes not just political rulers and their subjects but also parents and children, generals and soldiers, and teacher and student (fr. 10).

The fragment then draws an important conclusion from the principle stated in the first sentence: if anarchy is the greatest evil, then we must pay attention to every period of our life and see that it is lived under the appropriate rule. Human life is then divided into four ages, the child, the young man, the man and the old man. The Pythagoreans assign distinctive activities to each age group and stress that each age group should behave in its own proper way and not behave in a manner appropriate to another age so that children should not act like infants, young men like children, etc. (on these age groups see further below). The last sentence of the fragment then turns to a related but more specific topic, the proper diet for human beings, stressing that right from childhood even diet should be well ordered. The fragment then ends with what is in effect a summary statement of the basic principle that underlies Pythagorean education: order and due proportion are fine and advantageous while disorder and lack of proportion are shameful and disadvantageous.

The Theory of the Ages of Human Life in Fragment 2

The theory of the ages of human life is not the central focus of the fragment. The central focus is the universal human need for supervision. The universality of that need is expressed by asserting that attention must be given to every age and it is as examples of the application of supervision to all of human life that the various ages are introduced. Since explicit mention is made of “every age,” it is natural to assume that the ages that are then listed are intended to be comprehensive, i.e. to include every age, and they appear to do so. The four ages are: the child, the young man, the man and the old man. A single term is consistently used to refer to the first three ages (παῖς, νεανίσκος, ἀνὴρ), whereas two apparently equivalent terms are used for the fourth age (πρεσβύτης and γέρον). In line 13 it is asserted that children should not act like infants, so it might be supposed that there was a fifth age group, that of infants, but it seems more likely that infants were thought of as an early stage of the age of the child. Certainly it would be hard to specify the appropriate activities for the infant in the same way as for the other four groups. One might suppose that Pythagorean interest in significant numbers had a role to play in determining that there should be four ages, since in

early Pythagoreanism the number four, the *tetraktys*, had special significance (Iambl. *VP* 82; Burkert 1972: 72). However, while such number symbolism may have played a role in earlier Pythagorean accounts of the ages of human life (see further below), the *Precepts* betray no interest in such a conception. There is no mention of the number four in the text, not even simply to assert that there are four ages. The ages are merely listed by name and no emphasis is put on their number.

To each of these four ages are assigned appropriate activities. Children are supposed to practice reading and writing (γράμματα) as well as other subjects (τοῖς ἄλλοις μαθήμασιν). What these other subjects are is not clear. In the *Politics*, Aristotle talks of four customary subjects of education of which the first is reading and writing (γράμματα) as in the *Precepts*, while the other three are gymnastics, music and drawing (1337b24). In line 130 of fragment 9, the Pythagoreans call for training children in gymnastics (γυμνασίοις), which supports the idea that gymnastics should be understood as one of the studies mentioned here in fragment 2 (unless the sentence in fragment 9, lines 129–32 is an insertion by Iamblichus). In addition to at least these two of the four studies mentioned by Aristotle, the Pythagoreans may also have had basic mathematics in mind, since Archytas (fr. 1) clearly uses μαθήματα to refer to the quadrivium of four mathematical sciences (logistic, geometry, music and astronomy). This is not certain, however, and it is interesting that there is no explicit mention of mathematical studies. Young men are the next age group and they are to be trained in the laws and customs of the city. There is, however, no indication as to how such training should be carried out. Men are to give their attention to actions and services on behalf of the public (δημοσῖαις λειτουργίαις). At Athens such “liturgies” could be as significant as outfitting a war ship or providing the funding for a dramatic production. Finally, old men, on the basis of all their knowledge, should be engaged in reflection and serve as judges and councilors.

No age ranges are assigned to these various periods of life in fragment 2. Wehrli argues that each of these periods was twenty years in length on the basis of fragment 4, which asserts that children should know nothing of sex before age twenty (1967: 60). Fragment 4 here uses the word παῖς, which is the word used for the first age group in fragment 2, whereas a word for young man might normally have been expected in a prohibition on sex before age twenty, so fragment 4 probably does have

the first of the four age groups of fragment 2 in mind. If the first of the four ages is twenty years in length, Pythagorean emphasis on ordered patterns would indicate that the other ages were twenty years long as well. Wehrli's suggestion should thus probably be accepted. This agreement between fragment 4 and fragment 2 suggests that the *Precepts* adhered to a relatively consistent scheme of age groups. The same sort of consistency can in fact be found between fragment 2 and the fragments of the *Precepts* in Iamblichus, despite what appear to be divergences at first sight. The evidence suggests that there is one system of ages but that different aspects of it are emphasized in different contexts. Thus, although fragment 9 mentions just three groups in one passage (lines 15–41) and two in another (lines 52–5), in each case the names used for the groups correspond to those in fragment 2. Close examination of the context of each of these passages shows that they in no way deny the basic structure of four age groups but instead focus on problems that only require appeals to a smaller subset of the four (see the overview of the argument on section 2 of fr. 9).

There is evidence for the ages of human life elsewhere in the Pythagorean tradition, and it is important to consider how those conceptions relate to what is found in the *Precepts* and in particular to ask if the *Precepts* are in some way developing an earlier Pythagorean conception. There are two main clusters of evidence on the issue. First, there is the tradition that Pythagoras gave speeches to separate groups of people upon his arrival in Croton. In *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, Iamblichus presents four speeches, which presuppose three age groupings, since one speech is given to the women and the other three to differing ages of men: boys, youths, and the council members who were the youths' fathers. Thus the basic threefold division is that of children, young men and adults. The actual speeches in Iamblichus are a fabrication dating to the third century BC, but that fabrication is based on fourth-century reports that Pythagoras gave speeches adapted to different audiences upon his first arrival in Croton. Dicaearchus (fr. 40 Mirhady 2001 = fr. 33 Wehrli=Por. VP 18), reports that he spoke to the ruling body of elders, to the young men and to the boys, as well as to the women. This agrees with the groupings in Iamblichus except that the ruling body is identified as a body of old men (γερόντων) rather than as the fathers of the young men, so that the three groups here appear to be: boys, young men, and old men. Antisthenes, even earlier, makes the groups to whom he made

speeches, in addition to the women, the boys, the rulers and the ephebes (fr. 187 Giannantoni 1990). Thus, although there are some variations in names for the groups, the tradition of the speeches, in contrast to the four groups of the *Precepts*, seems to envisage three groups: children, young men and adults.

The second main cluster of evidence for age groups in the Pythagorean tradition agrees with the *Precepts* in presenting four groups. This tradition is stated most clearly in Diogenes Laertius (8.10) and Diodorus Siculus (10. 8) but also appears in other sources (e.g., Ovid *Met.* 15, 199–213; Theon 98; see Delatte 1922b: 110 and Rostagni 1924: 81, n.1 for other possible reflections of this tradition). Here are the reports of Diogenes and Diodorus:

Diogenes Laertius 8.10: διαιρεῖται δὲ καὶ τὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου βίον οὕτως· “Παῖς εἴκοσι ἔτεα, νεηνίσκος εἴκοσι, νεηνίης εἴκοσι, γέρων εἴκοσι. αἱ δὲ ἡλικίαι πρὸς τὰς ὥρας ὥδε σύμμετροι· παῖς ἔαρ, νεηνίσκος θέρος, νεηνίης φθινόπωρον, γέρων χειμῶν.” ἔστι δ’ αὐτῷ ὁ μὲν νεηνίσκος μειράκιον, ὁ δὲ νεηνίης ἀνήρ.

[Pythagoras] also divides human life as follows: child – twenty years, youth – twenty, young man – twenty, old man – twenty. The ages correlate with the seasons as follows: child – spring, youth – summer, young man – fall, old man – winter. For him the youth is a lad and the young man is a man.

Diodorus Siculus 10.9.5: οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι διήρουν καὶ τὰς ἡλικίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰς τέσσαρα μέρη, παιδός, νέου, νεανίσκου, γέροντος, καὶ τούτων ἑκάστην ἔφασαν ὁμοίαν εἶναι ταῖς κατὰ τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν τῶν ὥρων μεταβολαῖς, τὸ μὲν ἔαρ τῷ παιδί διδόντες, τὸ δὲ φθινόπωρον τῷ ἀνδρί, τὸν δὲ χειμῶνα τῷ γέροντι, τὸ δὲ θέρος τῷ νέῳ.

The Pythagoreans divided the ages of man into four parts, that of a child, that of a young person, that of a youth, that of an old man. They said that each of these was like to the changes of the seasons in the year, assigning spring to the child, fall to the man, winter to the old man and summer to the young person.

In the case of Diogenes Laertius, scholars have been slow to question this odd listing of two groups with the essentially synonymous names “youth” and “young man” and have sometimes supposed that this

peculiarity is a sign of the antiquity and genuineness of the division (Rostagni 1924: 81). Diogenes' report shows that even in antiquity readers were puzzled by this odd feature of the age groupings, since either Diogenes or his source adds the explanation "for him the youth (νεανίσκος) is a lad (μειράκιον) and the young man (νεηνίης) is a man (άνήρ)." Such a distinction between νεανίσκος and νεηνίης is unparalleled and implausible, however, and Diodorus' report of the same tradition suggests that a simple mistake in transmission has occurred. Thus, Diodorus first gives a list of the four ages that is similar to Diogenes', varying only in that the two names used for youth and young man are νέος and νεανίσκος rather than νεανίσκος and νεηνίης. However, when Diodorus goes on to list the ages a second time, when correlating them with the seasons of the year, he gives a list that does away with the awkward duplication of the age of the young man: παῖς, νέος, άνήρ, γέρων. It seems very plausible to assume that at some point in the tradition someone wrote νεηνίης as a synonym for νεανίσκος above the line or in the margin because νεηνίης is the more common term in later Greek (LSJ s.v. – in Herodotus 3.53 they are used as synonyms) and that this was then mistakenly copied into the text in transmission and replaced άνήρ. The explanation found in Diogenes for the use of both νεηνίης and νεανίσκος is simply the attempt of a later scholar to make sense of the nonsense that resulted. Scholars have probably accepted that awkward duplication on the grounds of its being the *lectio difficilior*, but when the *lectio difficilior* yields no obvious sense and forces us to posit a distinction between νεανίσκος and νεηνίης that is unparalleled, it is better to assume that the *lectio* is too *difficilior* and that a simple mistake has occurred. Scholars have suggested that Aristoxenus is a major source for both Diogenes Laertius and Diodorus in these passages (Zhmod 2012a: 72, n. 47; for a more restrained account see Schorn 2013). This conclusion is not inevitable and in fact unlikely (see the Introduction, Chapter 7), but if fragment 2 were the ultimate source of both Diogenes Laertius 8.10 and Diodorus 10.9.5, since there is not the slightest hint of any special distinction between νεανίσκος and νεηνίης in fragment 2 or elsewhere in the discussion of age groups in the *Precepts*, it seems overwhelmingly likely that the distinction between νεηνίης and νεανίσκος reported by Diogenes Laertius and reflected in Diodorus did in fact arise from the corruption in the manuscript tradition as described above.

Thus the tradition found in Diogenes Laertius and Diodorus agrees with the *Precepts* in positing four ages, and the names used in the *Precepts* are reflected in this tradition with *νενηνίης* replacing *ἀνὴρ* through the process described above. In Diogenes' account, although not in Diodorus', this tradition also agrees in making each of the ages twenty years in length. The major difference from the *Precepts* is that this tradition correlates the four ages with the four seasons, whereas no such correlation is found in the *Precepts*. The child is equated with spring, the young man with summer, the man with fall and the old man with winter. The central question, then, is whether the tradition found in Diogenes and Diodorus is a later development of the system of the *Precepts* or whether it represents a tradition that went back before the *Precepts* and of which the *Precepts* are themselves a development. The question cannot be answered with certainty. At first sight it would appear that the report in Diogenes cannot be early, since he says that he found it in the three books (the *Tripartitum*) assigned to Pythagoras (Diog. Laert. 8.9 referring back to 8.6), which modern scholarship has determined to be forgeries of the third century (Burkert 1972: 223–7). Scholars have sometimes argued that this *Tripartitum*, in fact, relied heavily on the *Precepts*, but I have argued in Chapter 7 of the Introduction that the connection with the *Precepts* is minimal. The forgery might, however, have made use of even earlier material and there are aspects of Diogenes' report that show connections to the *acusmata*. Thus, the *acusmata* as reported by Aristotle said that old age and decrease were alike as were youth and increase (Diog. Laert. 8.35; for its Aristotelian origin see Burkert 1972: 168, n. 18). This idea seems quite similar to associating the old man with winter, when all life has decreased to its minimum, and the youth to summer, when all life is increasing and flourishing (Burkert 1972: 171, n. 36). It is also true that the attempt to correlate various structures in the world, as the ages of man are correlated to the seasons, appears to have connections to the attempt in fifth-century Pythagoreanism to see analogues between numbers and things as reported by Aristotle (*Metaph.* 986a4). Thus, it may well be that the *Precepts* took over a conception of four ages that goes back to the earliest period of Pythagoreanism, but chose to eliminate the connections of the ages to the seasons, or that the *Precepts* adopted a common division of human life into four parts (see below) independently.

The discussion of age groups in the Pythagorean tradition and their similarity to those found in the *Precepts*, which has just been given, already suggests that the discussion of age groups in the *Precepts* may have been a development within the Pythagorean tradition and that there is no need to suppose that Aristoxenus is doing anything other than reporting the state of that development as he found it among his Pythagorean teachers and associates in the middle of the fourth century. Even if we reject the evidence for earlier Pythagorean treatment of the ages of human life as too speculative, however, it is crucial to recognize that the ages of human life, ἡλικίαι, were an extremely widespread topic of discussion in Greek culture. Interest in them is already clear in Solon in the sixth century, who set out a system of ten ages, each seven years long (fr. 27). No attempt can be made here to survey the whole subject. Garland provides a brief overview in which he identifies a threefold division into the young, middle-aged and elderly as perhaps the most common, appearing already in Hesiod but also in tragedy, while fourfold and sevenfold divisions were also popular (1990: 1–11). I will instead briefly survey texts that are most relevant to the *Precepts* and which help to show both its similarities to and differences from the rest of the tradition. The crucial conclusion is that the *Precepts* are best understood as a specifically Pythagorean development of the widespread Greek interest in age groupings and not as a wholesale borrowing from any particular system.

The Greek medical texts of the Hippocratic corpus, which date to the fifth and fourth centuries, treat the age of the patient as a crucial factor in understanding the human body and treating disease. Age groups are discussed in a wide range of contexts. Some texts discuss diseases that are typical of various ages (*Aph.* 3.24–31), others the typical constitution of bodies at various ages (*Vict.* 1.33), others the proper amount of exercise or food for each age (*Vict.* 1.2), others the health of various sorts of bodies at various ages (*Vict.* 1.32), others which fevers are typical of which ages (*Nat. Hom.* 15) and others to which seasons of the year each age is best adapted (*Aph.* 3.3). There is no single set of age groupings in the Hippocratic corpus. Different texts use different groupings and even within a single text sometimes one set of age groupings is used and sometimes another (compare *Aph.* 3.24–31 with *Aph.* 1.13). A division into four age groups appears to be most common (e.g., *Vict.* 1.33), although the various groupings into four ages are not identical to

one another (compare *Aph.* 1.13 with *Vict.* 1.33). Divisions into three (*Vict.* 1.32) and seven (*Hebd.* 5) age groups are also used.

On Regimen 1.33 provides the most striking parallel to fragment 2 of the *Precepts*. The Hippocratic text has a fourfold division of the ages of human life as fragment 2 does and the names assigned to them are exactly the same as in fragment 2: παῖς, νεηνίσκος, ἀνὴρ, πρεσβύτης. *On Regimen* is typically dated to the end of the fifth century or the first half of the fourth (Jouanna 1999: 409; Craik 2015: 275) so that it is roughly contemporaneous with the Pythagorean system described by Aristoxenus in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. There is no reason to think that either of the two texts is directly dependent on the other, since the age division is used for quite different purposes. The agreement in names for the ages is not as significant as might initially be thought, simply because there was a limited number of possible names for each of these periods of human life and because different names could be used interchangeably, as is shown by the use of both πρεσβύτης and γέρων for the oldest age group in fragment 2. The most reasonable conclusion to be drawn from the similarity between *On Regimen* and fragment 2 is that they are both making use of a fourfold division that was common in the first half of the fourth century and which was not the original invention of either text. Since a fourfold division of some sort is common in Hippocratic texts, it may be that the Pythagoreans were influenced by medical texts in general in adopting it, but this is far from certain. It is important to note that what is basically a fourfold division could be presented in quite different ways for different purposes by different Hippocratic texts. Thus, *Aphorisms* 3.24–7 subdivided the age of the παῖς into four parts, which each have their own characteristic diseases. In section 28, however, the diseases of the παῖς are treated as a group and then contrasted with the diseases of young men, those beyond this age (i.e. mature men), and old men. Thus sections 28–31 present the basic fourfold division, but the complexity of the diseases of childhood led the author to divide it into four parts in sections 24–7. So one might say that the author was working either with four age groups of which one is subdivided or with seven age groups, four of which belong to childhood.

The central difference between the age groups in the Hippocratic corpus and those in the *Precepts* is that the former use the age groups in treating diseases of the body whereas the latter use them in structuring human activity and education. The application to education is hardly

unique to the *Precepts*, however, and important parallels can be found in the fifth and fourth centuries. In Plato's *Protagoras*, the eponymous character describes Athenian education as divided into three phases (325c). The child is first educated at home by the nurse and parents, next the child is sent to teachers of letters, harp-playing and physical training, finally the city requires that the young men "learn the laws and live according to them" (326c). Much of what Protagoras describes differs from what is found in the *Precepts*, but there are some overlapping points. Some of these similarities are what we would expect out of any educational system, e.g., that the children learn their letters, but it is more conspicuous that both the Athenians and the *Pythagorean Precepts* stress that young men should be trained in the laws of the state.

Age groups famously played a large role in education and training in Sparta (Plutarch *Lyc.* 14–18). It is hard to assign a precise date of origin for these age groups but there is little doubt that they are much earlier than the *Precepts*. In his *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*, a text roughly contemporary with the Pythagorean way of life described in the *Precepts*, Xenophon identifies four age groups at Sparta, although differing in name and structure from those in the *Precepts*: παῖς, μεῖράκιον/νεανίσκος, ἡβῶντες, those beyond the age of the ἡβῶντες (*Lac.* 3–4). The details of the education and activities of each of these groups are quite different in the *Precepts* and the *Constitution*, but some of the principles mentioned by Xenophon show similarity to principles stated in the *Precepts*, not here in fragment 2, but in the further discussion of age groups in fragment 9. Thus, both the *Precepts* (fr. 9, lines 29–41) and Xenophon's Spartans (*Lac.* 3.1; cf. *Xen. Cyr.* 1.2.9) recognize that adolescence is a particularly dangerous age and reject the practice found in other cities whereby, once the child becomes a young man, he is allowed to govern himself. Yet, the details of the passages differ significantly and there is no reason to think that either passage is dependent on the other. They are simply two different manifestations of a conservative morality (see the commentary on fr. 9, lines 28–9).

When Xenophon writes the *Cyropaedia*, he assigns age groupings to the Persians that are in some ways similar to those he reports for the Spartans and to those found in the *Precepts*. There are four age groups, as in the *Precepts*, but the names differ from those in the *Precepts*: παῖδες, ἔφηβοι, τέλειοι ἄνδρες, those beyond the age of military service, who are also called γεραιότεροι. As the names for the age groups suggest,

the emphasis is on military training, which is totally absent from the *Precepts*, and there is little similarity between the two systems in the activities assigned to the four groups. There was also age/class organization on Crete, and some have argued that such organization was much more widely spread in Greece than is commonly recognized (Sallares 1991: 160–92).

Plato and Aristotle also used age groupings to address philosophical problems in various areas, but none of these age groupings show any significant connection to the *Precepts*. I have demonstrated this for Plato's age groupings in the *Republic* in Chapter 9 of the Introduction. In the *Laws* (664c–d) Plato sets out a different system of age groups. He identifies three choirs that are to be used in education. There is a choir of children up to the age of 20, a choir of men under 30 and a choir of men aged 30–60. Those over 60 are no longer able to sing and instead tell stories that instill the same moral values as the songs of the various choirs. This set of age groupings has nothing to do with the groups of the *Republic* but like them finds no significant parallel in the *Precepts*.

Aristotle employs a threefold system of age groups in the *Rhetoric*, describes a system that ties ages to the seasons in *On the Generation of Animals* (784a17–19), and thus is presumably fourfold, and finally praises a sevenfold system in the *Politics* (1336b40–1337a1). It is not appropriate to go through these in detail here but two points should be made. First, the systems are tailored to the needs of the specific problem that Aristotle is addressing. Thus, in the *Rhetoric* three ages are identified (1388b36–1389a1 – νεότης, ἀκμή, γῆρας) rather than four, leaving out the age of the young child (παῖς), presumably because the central question is what sort of speech will be effective on each of the groups and formal speeches are not normally delivered to young children. Second, there is again no important similarity between Aristotle's various age groupings and what is found in the *Precepts*. It should be clear after this survey of the use of age groupings in Greek culture that the *Precepts* are not derived from any of the various systems attested in other authors but instead are part of a widespread tradition of theorizing on the topic in the late fifth and first half of the fourth centuries. Inevitably, given the similarity of subject matter, they show some similarity to a variety of other treatises in this tradition. What is of interest is not so much these similarities as the

features that are distinctive to the *Precepts* and it is to these features that we must finally turn.

As we have seen, there is nothing particularly distinctive in the four-fold division of the ages or the names assigned to them. Similarly the activities assigned to each age group are largely traditional, e.g., children learn their letters, young men study the laws, men engage in public service and old men give counsel. There are, however, four distinctive features that can be noted. First, if it is correct to assume that each age division lasts for twenty years, and this is an inference rather than a certainty (see above), then the length of time assigned to childhood is unusually long, until age twenty, and includes the suggestion that those younger than twenty should not even know about sexuality (see fr. 4, lines 9–10). Second, the length of time for the activities of young men is even more remarkable. They spend twenty years studying the laws and customs of the state, which seems like a very long time, and are not able to engage in active public service until they are forty. Third, creative reflection on laws and customs is not allowed until very late. Individuals up to the age of forty are clearly engaged just in memorizing the laws and customs and habituating themselves to them. Men between ages forty and sixty are engaged in action but the implication is surely that these are actions in accord with the laws and that in no way challenge them. It is only those over sixty who engage in reflection, which would presumably focus on laws and customs, and who are able to give advice about them. Indeed, the structure of the sentence in lines 11–15 suggests that reflection, judgments and advice are assigned as appropriate activities to old men in order to (βπω5 – line 13) maintain the proper relations between the age groups so that children do not act like infants etc. Other fragments of the *Precepts* make clear that generally speaking traditional laws should be maintained (fr. 8), but fragment 2 appears to suggest that whatever analysis and modification of those laws is allowed is carried on only by those over sixty.

Fourth, here in fragment 2 as well as in the discussion of age groups in fragment 9, the Pythagoreans lay heavy emphasis on strict adherence to the age structure so that the different ages do not impede one another. In fragment 2 the age groups arise as part of the discussion of the need for rule and supervision, if the human being is to be saved. The age groups emphasize the need for each age to play its own role and to be ruled by that role rather than trying to take on some other role. The main

danger envisaged in fragment 2 is of individuals acting in ways that are characteristic of younger ages. Thus, children are not supposed to act like infants, they have the serious business of learning their letters and other studies to attend to. Young men are not supposed to act like children and are thus to go beyond the study of literature and other disciplines in order to train themselves in the laws. Men should no longer just study the law but carry out public services. This proper observance of the duties of their own age of the first three groups is apparently supervised by the old men and in their own case the danger is not so much that they will act like the member of a younger group as that they will become senile and make a mistake in overseeing the groups (line 15 – παραφρονοῦεν). In fragment 9 this same concern with each age doing what is appropriate to it is also found, but here the emphasis is the reverse of fragment 2. In this case what is to be avoided is the precocious, i.e. trying to take on activities of older age groups. There is no reason to see these differing emphases of fragment 2 and fragment 9 as contradictory. They are, rather, complementary. Between them they emphasize that people must “act their age” both by not acting like younger age groups and also by not being precocious. Finally, fragment 9 also stresses that adherence to the age groups means connecting each age properly to the other so that what is appropriate to be handed down from age to age is indeed passed on. Thus, the Pythagorean age groups are distinctive both for their structure and for the attention given to the strict maintenance of that structure and the dangers of not maintaining it. This should not be surprising given the assertion in fragment 8 that it is better to abide by traditional laws that are somewhat worse than others, than to easily change laws. There is an interesting parallel with Plato here but one that again emphasizes the difference between Plato and the *Precepts*. Just as the *Precepts* argue that it is crucial that each age group do its own thing and not what belongs to another age group, so Plato argues that justice in his ideal *Republic* is precisely that each of the three classes of people in the state (the rulers, the auxiliaries and the money-makers), does its own thing and not what belongs to another class (*Resp.* 433b). But, of course, the *Precepts* know nothing of Plato’s three classes of citizens and Plato is not working with the four age groups of the Pythagoreans.

Detailed Commentary

Line 1 – καθόλου δὲ: This is a favorite adverbial expression of Aristoxenus in the *Precepts* and in his *Elementa harmonica* (see the discussion of style in the *Pythagorean Precepts* in [Chapter 3](#) in the Introduction). The typical English translation for the expression elsewhere in Greek is “generally” or “in general.” Aristotle uses it reasonably frequently and in three common ways. First, he uses it to point out something that is a general rule but that does explicitly admit of exceptions. Thus at *EN* 1180b8–10 he says that “As a general rule (καθόλου μὲν), rest and fasting are beneficial for one who has a fever, but for a certain person this is perhaps not the case.” Second, it is used to indicate a general discussion of a topic as opposed to a detailed account that goes into its parts (*Pol.* 1258b33–4 καθόλου μὲν εἴρηται . . . τὸ δὲ κατὰ μέρος ἀκριβολογεῖσθαι). Finally, it is used of general principles or rules that are laid down without making clear whether they admit of exceptions, but implying that they do not or should not. Thus, in the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle says “As a general rule it is ridiculous when a man blames others for things he himself does or would do” (1398a12–14). People do frequently advise others to do things that they themselves do not do, but Aristotle’s point is that they generally appear ridiculous when they do so (see also *GA* 768b5). Aristoxenus’ seven usages in the *Elementa harmonica* fall into the second and third categories found in Aristotle. Thus, Aristoxenus uses it in the second way listed above, when he says “we must speak of the interval in general, and then it must be subdivided in as many ways as it can be” (8.10 Da Rios, tr. Barker 1989: 128; cf. 41.13 Da Rios). On the other hand he also uses it of a general rule, where the implication is that there are few if any exceptions. Thus he says “to put it generally not one of our predecessors has left us a clear account” (12.15 Da Rios; tr. Barker 1989: 131; cf. 11.2, 44.1, 55.4, 61.13).

Here in fragment 2 as well as in all other examples in the *Precepts*, it is this last sort of usage that is found. There are never any clear exceptions to the general rule identified and the implication seems to be that the rule is almost universal. In fragment 10, lines 30–1, καθόλου is paired with ἀπλῶς (“simply,” “absolutely”), which indicates that Aristoxenus used it of something that was approaching the status of a universal rule and in this passage, indeed, it needs to be translated “universally.” Accordingly, in other passages, the translation “as a general rule,” seems better than “generally,” since it implies that the principle in question is indeed a rule that admits of few exceptions. In fragment 10, the Pythagoreans indicate that what is appropriate in human behavior is only teachable up to a point and thus only admits of universal rules up to a point. Since καθόλου is used with the words that introduce the *Precepts* rather than being imbedded in them, it might be that the word is Aristoxenus’ rather than that of the Pythagoreans. Thus, Aristoxenus may have used καθόλου to pick out

precisely those rules that were of almost universal application as opposed to other precepts that admitted of more exceptions, such as those mentioned in fragment 10, but it may also be that it was the Pythagoreans themselves that used the word in this way.

Staab (2002: 400) notes the frequent use of καθόλου δέ in sections 200–13 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* but fails to note its presence in fragments of the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus (here in fr. 2 and in fr. 4) and its rarity elsewhere in Iamblichus and hence the likelihood that its frequency in sections 200–13 is the result of that passage being, in fact, taken largely from Aristoxenus. Staab takes καθόλου δέ to indicate an associative introduction of a thought and as meaning “apropos, what occurs to me on just this point.” He provides no parallels for such a translation, however, and fails to note the usage of the phrase in Aristotle and elsewhere in Aristoxenus, which I have discussed above.

Line 1 – ὑπολαμβάνειν: This is a verb that Aristoxenus commonly uses in the third person plural, with the Pythagoreans as the understood subject, in order to introduce precepts. It is so used in fragment 8, line 8 (“they supposed that it was useful . . .”) and fragment 9, lines 145 and 149 (“they supposed that it was necessary”). It thus indicates the cognitive state of the Pythagoreans in regard to their precepts. In fragment 9 the verbs ὑπολαμβάνειν and δοξάζειν and their cognate nouns ὑπόληψις and δόξα appear to be used virtually synonymously (see the discussion of the argument of lines 1–14 in the commentary on fr. 9). The Pythagoreans there assert that to form suppositions and opinions well belongs to the few (καλῶς ὑπολαμβάνειν τε καὶ δοξάζειν ὀλίγοις ὑπάρχειν). This usage shows that in themselves suppositions or opinions are neither good nor bad cognitive states but that they can be either well or ill formed. Indeed, in the same fragment (lines 10–12), reference is made to the suppositions and opinions of those who know, which presumably thus constitute knowledge. It is thus important to emphasize that, while ὑπολαμβάνειν frequently refers to a supposition that is ill founded (LSJ s.v. III), just as in English we talk of something being “mere supposition,” the verb does not always have this connotation and clearly does not have it in the *Precepts*. Thus, the Pythagoreans are often the subject of the verb, where no critique of their suppositions is suggested (fr. 8, fr. 9, lines 145 and 149) and here in fr. 2 what they suppose is said to be necessary. It is, therefore, evident that the verb is not intended to have any negative implication. Instead it appears to introduce suppositions that they regarded as fully justified.

Lines 1–2 – μηδὲν εἶναι μῆζον κακὸν ἀναρχίας: This central thesis of the fragment has some parallels in Plato and Aristotle, but there is no reason to suppose that Aristoxenus derived the idea from these sources, since it is also found in earlier non-philosophical authors. *Anarchia* occurs just five times in

Aristotle, all in the *Politics* and *Athenian Constitution*. It is used in reference either to times when archons are not elected because of factional strife or to the anarchy and disorder that can be characteristic of democracy (*Pol.* 1302b29). Aristotle certainly is no supporter of anarchy and disorder, but there is no sweeping assertion such as we find in fragment 2 that anarchy is the greatest of evils for human beings. *Anarchia* also appears five times in the genuine writings of Plato, four times in the *Republic* and once in the *Laws*. Plato uses it twice in his highly unfavorable description of the democratic soul in Book 8 of the *Republic* (560e) and a little bit later in his description of tyranny (562e) and the tyrannical soul (575a1). It is in the *Laws*, however, that we find the closest parallel to fragment 2. Plato's remarks are couched in his discussion of military organization (942a) and to that extent differ from fragment 2, where the discussion seems to be the whole of human life. Plato says that the central principle of military organization is that no one, male or female, should be left ἀναρχον. No one should act on their own initiative but each person should always look to the commander and be guided by him in even the smallest of actions. Accordingly he says that the task of ruling and being ruled should be practiced from earliest childhood and ἀναρχία should be removed from the lives of all people (942d). This passage does not match fragment 2 word for word, i.e. it is not asserted that there is no greater evil than anarchy, but the pattern of thought is clearly similar. However, there is a much closer parallel to fragment 2 to be found in a non-philosophic author, Sophocles. In the *Antigone*, Creon, using language that is almost identical to fragment 2, asserts that ἀναρχίας δὲ μείζον οὐκ ἔστιν κακόν (672). It also appears in fragment 61 of Antiphon (= Stob. 2.31.40). Of course, Creon and the Pythagoreans might have understood the statement in slightly different ways. Creon calls for absolute obedience to whatever decree he issues, no matter how arbitrary, while the Pythagoreans are more likely to be thinking of the necessity of following the traditional laws of the state and the commands of parents. Nonetheless they share the idea that legitimate authority should be followed.

Line 2 – διασώζεσθαι: A correct understanding of what is meant by “being saved” is crucial for grasping the purpose of the *Pythagorean Precepts* as a whole. The importance of the concept of safety or preservation is clear both because it appears here in a central statement about human nature and because it reappears in three other places in the fragments of the *Precepts* (fr. 8, line 29 – σωτήριον; fr. 11, line 7 – σωτήριον; fr. 9, line 13 – σωθησομένους). When applied to persons, the simple verb σώζω means “to save from death” or “to keep alive” and the compound with δια- as a prefix suggests that the person is preserved or kept safe *through* a period of danger. Thus an initial reading of fragment 2 might suggest that a human being is by nature not such as to be kept alive without someone supervising them. This

interpretation is problematic, however, in that it is not obviously true that a human being cannot survive without supervision. To be sure one might argue that a child, especially a very young child, left on its own would not survive, but fragment 2 refers to a human being not a child. It is not clear that an adult human could not survive without supervision. There seem then to be two ways to interpret fragment 2 on this point. It might be arguing that 1) despite the problem raised above, human beings cannot survive without supervision, or 2) while human beings can physically survive without supervision, they cannot be kept safe in some other sense.

The other appearances of the concept of safety in the fragments show that option 2 is almost certainly correct. The usage of σωτήριον in fragment 11 might appear to support the first option, since σωτήριον is applied to the continued existence of a friendship which will not be safe, if competition is allowed to enter the friendship. Nonetheless, fragment 11 is not particularly closely connected to fragment 2; it is talking about the survival of a friendship and not of human beings. The usages in fragment 8 and fragment 9, which are concerned with the survival of human beings and do have connections to fragment 2, as I will show, give strong support to option 2. In fragment 9, line 13, the point is made that those children who are going to be saved must pay attention to the opinions and judgments of their elders. One might again suppose that it is the physical existence of the children that is in question and envisage the opinions in question being ones about the physical safety of the child, e.g., opinions about which foods are poisonous. However, the important thing to note is that the children are supposed to pay attention not just to their elders but to those who have lived a good life (καλῶς βεβιωκότων), which surely suggests that they are learning more than just survival skills and that they are being saved from more than just death. Fragment 8 gives further evidence for this interpretation. That fragment ends by asserting that easily abandoning existing laws is not safe (σωτήριον). The fragment as a whole has a strong connection to fragment 2 in that its central theme, like that of fragment 2, is the human need for supervision. Also, like fragment 2, it makes a fundamental assertion about human nature: that it is hubristic and has a bewildering variety of impulses and desires. Fragment 8, however, is more precise about the results of lack of supervision for human beings. Human life without supervision lacks all self-control and order (line 16, σωφρονισμός τις καὶ τάξις). Thus it is the order and temperance of human life that are preserved by supervision. Such an interpretation works well in both fragment 2 and fragment 11 where διασώζω and σώζω are used. Human beings in general, and particularly the young, will be ruined, will not have their potential to live a good life preserved, without the supervision which makes possible the temperance and order that are crucial to living a good life. The suggestion in Huffman 2006: 110 that what is preserved is “our true human nature” is clearly

mistaken since there is no reference to any such “true” human nature in the fragments. Human nature is presented in a uniformly negative light in the *Precepts*.

While most usages of διασφάζω and σφάζω elsewhere in Greek, when applied to human beings, refer to continued existence, there are some exceptions, where what is preserved is a certain sort of life as in the case of the *Precepts*. Thus, in the *Memorabilia* (1.5.5), Xenophon has Socrates say that if a man is a slave to bodily pleasures he should pray to the gods to give him good masters, since only thus would he be saved (σωθείη). Here being saved does not refer to mere physical survival. The man without self-control needs good masters to establish such control in him and thus “save” him by allowing him to live a good life. There are also passages in Plato, where both the simple and compound verb refer to something other than simple physical survival. Thus, at the end of the *Republic* (621b–c), Socrates tells Glaucon that Er woke up on the funeral pyre before being burned, so that his tale about what happens after death was saved (ἔσωθη). He continues “and it [sc. the story] could save us if we believe it” (καὶ ἡμᾶς ἂν σώσειεν). Here the point is not that they will be kept alive if they believe the story but rather that they will be saved from a bad fate in the next life because their soul will be saved from pollution. Earlier in the *Republic* at 527e Plato similarly talks of an organ of knowledge in the soul whose preservation (σωθῆναι) is much more important than the preservation of ten thousand eyes. In context the emphasis is again not on the mere survival of this organ of the soul but on its being saved in its pure state (ἐκκαθαίρεται) and not corrupted. Although these passages from Plato do provide a parallel for the usage of σφάζω to refer to preservation of a certain sort of life, there is no indication that the passages of the *Precepts* on “safety,” which are discussed above are derived from Plato. There is nothing in the *Precepts* about an organ of the soul or about the fate of the soul in the next life, which would be expected if the *Precepts* were written with these passages of Plato in mind. As the passage from the *Memorabilia* cited above shows, the conception of “being saved” in the sense of “being saved from living a bad life” was present in a wider spectrum of authors in the fourth century and not limited to Plato.

The comparison between Plato and the *Precepts* on this issue raises an important point. Given Pythagoras’ interest in the fate of the soul and in transmigration, it might be tempting to interpret talk of “saving” human beings as referring to saving their souls for a better reincarnation, particularly since Plato talks of such a saving at the end of the *Republic* in the passage discussed above. Moreover, in the *Cratylus*, Plato suggests an etymology for the word σῶμα (body) that derives it from σφάζω (400c). He says that the Orphics must have given this name to the body in connection with their belief that our soul in this life is undergoing punishment for some crime. The soul has the body as an enclosure so that it may be kept safe (σφάζηται) as in a prison. The body is “the

safe” of the soul until it pays what is due for its crime. The *Precepts* are clearly closer to Plato’s comments in the *Republic* than to the Orphic view of the *Cratylus* in that they envisage being saved as something good in itself and not as a preservation of the soul so that it can complete its punishment. Yet, the *Precepts’* conception of “being saved” is clearly at odds both with Plato’s remarks in the *Republic* and with the Orphic view discussed in the *Cratylus*, because the *Precepts* are resolutely fixed on life in this world and say nothing of the fate of the soul after death. It is true that salvation (σωτηρία) was an important concept in later Greek mysteries such as those of Isis (Burkert 1987: 14–18). To suppose that the mere mention of “being saved” in the *Precepts* introduces such otherworldly concerns, in the absence of any other evidence for such concerns elsewhere in the *Precepts*, is clearly not warranted.

Line 3 – περὶ δε: Aristoxenus frequently uses this phrase plus the genitive to introduce a new section of the *Precepts*. See the discussion of the style of the *Precepts* in the Introduction.

Line 5 – φιланθρώπους: Both this adjective and the noun φιλανθρωπία appear in the late fifth and first half of the fourth centuries. Plato (*Euthphr.* 3d) uses the noun to describe Socrates as pouring out whatever he has to every man without payment because of his love of men (ὑπὸ φιλανθρωπίας). Interestingly, Xenophon (*Mem.* 1.2.60) also uses the adjective of Socrates, describing him as “a man of the people and a friend of mankind” (δημοτικός καὶ φιάνθρωπος), again because he never exacted a fee from those with whom he associated. See the commentary on the second half of fragment 10 for discussion of the significance of the requirement that the rulers love humanity.

Line 6 – πειθηνίους: Elsewhere this word, meaning literally “obedient to the rein” (ἡνία), appears first in the adverbial form πειθηνίως in the first centuries BC and AD in Arius Didymus and Philo. Its appearance here might suggest that later terminology has crept into the text here, but the Pythagoreans show a decided propensity for coining words (see the next note) and it is not impossible that they were in fact the first to use this word.

Line 6 – φιλάρχοντας: This adjective meaning “loving the rulers” appears only here and is an obvious neologism either on the part of the Pythagoreans or Aristoxenus. It is to be distinguished from the more common adjective φίλαρχος, which means “loving rule,” i.e. “enjoying rule over others.” See the commentary on the second half of fragment 10 for discussion of the significance of the requirement that the ruled love the rulers.

Line 7 – ἡλικίας: See the commentary on fr. 9, line 15.

Line 9 – γυμνάζεσθαι: For the use of the dative with this passive form, meaning “to be practiced/trained in,” see Hp. *Vict.* 3.68.101.

Line 10 – λειτουργίαις: Public services performed at the expense of the individual, such as providing for the training of a tragic chorus, are not limited to Athens. Isocrates refers to them as existing in Siphnos (19.36) and Antiphon to their use in Mytilene (5.77). Here in the *Precepts* the term is probably used very generally of any service rendered to the state and not just paying for some public expense. Aristotle refers to bearing children as a public service (*Pol.* 1335b28 – λειτουργεῖν . . . πρὸς τεκνοποιίαν).

Line 11 – ἐνθυμήσει: Before Aristoxenus this noun is rare, appearing only in a fragment of Euripides (Nauck 1889, fr. 246) and in Thucydides (1.132.5). The cognate verb ἐνθυμέομαι means “to lay to heart” or “to ponder” as well as “to take to heart” or “be concerned” (LSJ). Demosthenes frequently uses ἐνθυμηθῆναι with λογίσασθαι to mean “to reflect on and consider” (e.g., 1.21). The passage in Thucydides provides a good parallel for the noun’s use here in fragment 2. It is used of a messenger who gets cold feet about carrying a message, taking fright “in accordance with a reflection” (i.e. “when he reflected” – κατὰ ἐνθυμήσιν τινα) that none of the previous messengers had ever come back. It thus refers to a process of “consideration” or “reflection.” The Pythagoreans envisage the elders as engaged in “considerations/reflections” on issues of interest to the community.

Line 11 – κριτηρίοις: The meaning here is not “standard” or “criterion” as in the criterion of truth found in Hellenistic philosophy but rather “court” or perhaps the “judgments” made by the court. For the meaning “court” see Plato *Lg.* 767b.

Line 12 – ἐναναστρέφεσθαι: This verb is rare. It only appears twice elsewhere, once in Gregory of Nyssa (fourth century AD) and once in Hesychius’ lexicon. In Hesychius it is given, along with ἐνδιατρίβει as a gloss on ἐγκαλινδεῖται which means “to roll about in” and can be applied literally, e.g., to rolling in the sand, or metaphorically, e.g., to rolling in misfortunes (LSJ s.v.); ἐνδιατρίβει means “to spend time in” or “linger/dwell on something.” Since ἐναναστρέφεσθαι is so rare, the fact that the other occurrence is late is not a secure indication that the verb itself is late. The simpler verb ἀναστρέφω is a relatively common verb that is found already in Homer. In the passive it commonly means “to dwell in,” “to be engaged in,” or “to conduct oneself.” Moreover, Aristoxenus uses the simpler verb in fragment 9, line 100 of the *Precepts*, with the preposition ἐν to refer to “people who are engaged in power” or “people who live a life of power” (τῶν ἐν ἐξουσίαις ἀναστρεφόμενων). The rarer compound with the prefix ἐν- that Aristoxenus uses here in fragment 2 need not differ significantly in meaning. The prefix just emphasizes that someone is engaged *in* something. Xenophon

uses ἀναστρέφω of those engaged in farming (οἱ ἐν τῇ γεωργίᾳ ἀναστρεφόμενοι – *Oec.* 5.13). It is clearly with such a meaning that Aristoxenus uses ἐναναστρέφεσθαι: “they supposed that the old men should be engaged in reflection, courts and giving counsel.” As noted above, the *Pythagorean Precepts* show a fondness for coining terms or using distinctive terminology. Some of this is clearly due to the Pythagoreans, since Aristoxenus calls attention to it in several places (e.g., fr. 9, line 16) but in a case such as this it is unclear whether the unusual form is due to the Pythagoreans or Aristoxenus.

Line 12 – μετὰ πάσης ἐπιστήμης: The description of the elders as being “engaged in reflection, courts and giving counsel *with all of their knowledge*” raises several questions. First, are the elders the only members of society who are thought to have knowledge? Certainly they are the only ones to whom knowledge is explicitly assigned here. In line 5 the rulers are described as being ἐπιστήμων. If only the elders have ἐπιστήμη, then it would appear that they alone are, properly speaking, rulers. This conclusion would be in agreement with the description of elders as engaged in courts and giving counsel. The actions and public service ascribed to those in the age group of men might be thought of as acts of ruling but could be seen as performed under the guidance of the elders. Second, what sort of knowledge is being ascribed to the elders? In light of the knowledge ascribed to rulers in line 5, it might be knowledge of how to rule or what is best for the state. Elsewhere in the fragments of the *Precepts* ἐπιστήμη is paired with τέχνη (fr. 6) and ἐμπειρία (frs. 5 and 10) in a way that suggests that it is to be understood as theoretical or scientific knowledge in contrast to practice (see the commentary on fr. 10, line 37). Fragment 10, lines 40–3, also indicates that in sciences (ἐπιστήμῃς) it is necessary to identify universal first principles or starting points on the basis of examination of “the parts of the investigation” (see the account of the argument of fr. 10, lines 36–56). This makes it sound as if the model for science was something like the axiomatic deductive structure of Greek geometry. Since fragment 2 does not explicitly refer to any set of sciences in describing the education of the various age groups, it seems best to interpret the ἐπιστήμη of the elders in a loose way as referring to some sort of theoretical knowledge, which goes beyond mere experience but which is not here defined more precisely. This knowledge will be relevant to ruling and in context it is clear that it will particularly enable the elders to ensure that each age group acts its age and does not act like the immediately preceding age, or, in the case of the elders themselves, that they do not become senile.

Line 13 – νηπιάζοιεν: Most uses of this verb come from the first centuries AD. The verb does, however, appear already in a fragment of Aeschylus in the fifth century (Tet. 34A fr. 356, line 9 Mette) and in a fragment of Erinna in the fourth

(fr. 1b, line 29, Diehl), so that Aristoxenus could have used it in the fourth century as well.

Line 14 – παιδαριεύοιντο: This verb appears only here and in several entries in Hesychius' lexicon, where it is given as a gloss on even rarer words (παῖσδῃ, βλαττοῖ) meaning "to act like a child."

Line 14 – νεανιεύοιντο: This verb most frequently means not simply "to act like a young man" but to act willfully or wantonly (e.g., Isoc. 20.17; Pl. *Gorg.* 482c4), but in this context of age groups it is very easy for the Pythagoreans to take advantage of its etymological meaning.

Line 15 – παραφρονόειν: This verb is used to indicate that someone is mad or deranged. Herodotus applies it to Cambyses (3.34). Since it is applied to old men here in the *Precepts*, it seems best to translate it to indicate the madness of the elderly, i.e. senility. Powell (1966 s.v.) notes that in Herodotus it often has an ingressive sense, "to go mad" (3.61) and such a meaning makes good sense in this context in the *Precepts*.

Lines 15–16 – καὶ τὴν τροφὴν τεταγμένως προσφέρεισθαι: While τροφή can refer either specifically to food or more generally to nurture and rearing, in every other place where it is used in the *Precepts* it clearly refers just to food (fr. 4, line 14 "full of food (τροφῆς) and drink"; fr. 9, lines 82, 85, 89, 120, 131, 154). Moreover, τροφή is used with προσφέρω frequently elsewhere in Greek and the reference is always to taking food and/or drink (e.g., Pl. *Lg.* 660a; Arist. *Pr.* 883b34). Aristoxenus also uses the combination in his work *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* in a description of the Pythagoreans as eating bread and honey (Athenaeus 2.47 = fr. 27 Wehrli). Thus, although the Pythagoreans would presumably have argued that all aspects of our rearing should be orderly, in this passage they are asserting that it is necessary "to take food in an orderly fashion," i.e. that it is necessary "to have a diet that is well ordered." Once it is seen that the reference is narrowly to diet rather than to training as a whole, the force of καὶ in line 15 becomes clear. In line 7 the Pythagoreans assert that attention must be given to every age group and go on to list the most important activities for each group. In line 15 they make the point that attention must be given *even* (καὶ) to diet. This attention starts in childhood (εὐθύς ἐκ παιδῶν) but applies to the whole of life. (See also the commentary on fr. 9, lines 131–2.)

Lines 16–18 – ἡ μὲν τάξις καὶ συμμετρία καλὰ καὶ σύμφορα, ἡ δ' ἀτάξις καὶ ἀσυμμετρία αἰσχρὰ τε καὶ ἀσύμφορα: Both here and in fragment 8, τάξις appears to mean order in a general sense and is assumed to be a fundamental good without further argument. See further the commentary on fragment 8, line 16.

On the other hand, *συμμετρία* appears to be a slightly narrower concept meaning “due proportion.” In the *Precepts* it appears only here and in the parallel passage in Iamblichus: fragment 9, line 49. As a mathematical term it indicates that two magnitudes have a common measure (Barker 2010). Here, however, there is no indication that it has this narrow mathematical meaning and it appears to indicate simply that there is a proper proportion between the various elements of a whole. Since Aristoxenus mentions it in the context of diet, it is important to note that, in the Hippocratic corpus, *συμμετρία* is used of the proper proportion between exercise, the amount of food, the constitution of the patient, the season of the year, the winds, the locality in which the patient lives and the constitution of the specific year (*Vict.* 1.2). Knowledge of the proper proportion of these factors is crucial to producing health.

In the *Philebus*, Plato identifies *συμμετρία* along with beauty and truth as the three causes of goodness just as in the *Gorgias* he identified *τάξις* as one of the causes of excellence (503e–504d, 506d–e). It is thus certainly the case that Plato and the Pythagoreans were in agreement that order and due proportion were fundamental goods, but this is a widespread Greek view. It became common for Greeks to try to explain beauty in terms of *συμμετρία* (Barker 2010) and this practice may have begun already in the fifth century with the sculptor Polyclitus (Huffman 2010). Democritus regards due proportion of life (*βίου συμμετρίῃ*) as the key to happiness (fr. 191). Aristotle uses the same sort of language as fragment 2 in asserting that order, due proportion and definiteness (*τάξις καὶ συμμετρία καὶ τὸ ὀρίσμενον*) are the main species of beauty (*τοῦ καλοῦ*). He adds that the mathematical sciences particularly represent these characteristics (*Metaph.* 1078a36–b2). Given the prominence of mathematical ideas in the philosophy of the fifth- and fourth-century Pythagoreans, Philolaus and Archytas, it would hardly be surprising that the *Pythagorean Precepts* highlight such concepts, but, in fragment 2, Aristoxenus makes no explicit reference to mathematics.

Lines 17–18 – *σύμφορα* . . . *ἄσύμφορα*: Both of these adjectives are relatively common and appear already in early wisdom literature (Hesiod *Works and Days* 782–3), with the meanings “favorable/unfavorable” or “advantageous/disadvantageous.”

Line 18 – *ἄσυμμετρία*: There are only a handful of uses of this noun before Aristoxenus. Plato uses it once in what is apparently its earliest use. He uses it in the *Gorgias* (525a5) to describe the soul of a great king in the underworld as full of “disproportion and ugliness” (*ἄσυμμετρίας τε καὶ αἰσχρότητος*). It appears three times in the extant works of Aristotle, twice with the technical mathematical meaning “incommensurability” (*Metaph.* 983a16, 1061b1) and once with the more general meaning of “lack of proportion” (*Mete.* 380a32). Theophrastus uses it in his account of disease in seed crops, which he explains as due to “lack of

measure” (ἄσυμμετρίαν) in food or surrounding air. He explains the lack of measure as arising when there is too much or too little food or when the weather is too rainy or too dry (*CP* 3.22.3).

The only other use of ἄσυμμετρία in the *Precepts* is found in fragment 3, line 7, where it is the name for one of the kinds of mistaken desire. Aristoxenus in effect goes on to define ἄσυμμετρία in this context, by saying that it occurs when a desire is stronger or lasts longer than is fitting (σφοδρότερον δὲ καὶ χρονιώτερον τοῦ προσήκοντος).

14 | Fragment 3: Desire (37 W)

Stobaeus, *Eclogae* 3.10.66 [περί ἀδικίας καὶ φιλαργυρίας καὶ πλεονεξίας]

Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων

περὶ δὲ ἐπιθυμίας τάδε ἔλεγον· εἶναι τὸ πάθος τοῦτο ποικίλον 1
καὶ πολυειδέστατον. εἶναι δὲ τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν τὰς μὲν ἐπικτήτους 2
τε καὶ παρασκευαστάς, τὰς δὲ συμφύτους. αὐτὴν μέντοι τὴν 3
ἐπιθυμίαν ἐπιφορὰν τινὰ τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ ὁρμὴν καὶ ὄρεξιν εἶναι 4
πληρώσεως ἢ παρουσίας αἰσθήσεως, ἢ κενώσεως καὶ ἀπουσίας 5
καὶ τοῦ μὴ αἰσθάνεσθαι. ἐπιθυμίας δὲ ἡμαρτημένης τε καὶ φαύλης 6
τρία εἶναι εἶδη τὰ γνωριμώτατα, ἀσχημοσύνην ἀσυμμετρίαν 7
ἀκαιρίαν. ἡ γὰρ αὐτόθεν εἶναι τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἀσχήμονά τε καὶ 8
φορτικὴν καὶ ἀνελεύθερον, ἡ τοῦτο μὲν οὐ, σφοδρότερον δὲ καὶ 9
χρονιώτερον τοῦ προσήκοντος, ἡ τρίτον πρὸς ταῦτα, ὅτε οὐ δεῖ 10
καὶ πρὸς ἃ οὐ δεῖ. 11

1 δὲ ἐπιθυμίας] S idem M sed m. rec. ἐπιθυμίας A ἔλεγον] Hense
ex M^dA cf. Iambl. ἔλεγεν S **1–2** ποικίλον καὶ πολυειδέστατον]
M^dA ποικίλον καὶ πολύπονον καὶ πολυειδέστατον S Tr.
3 συμφύτους] ἐμφύτους Cobet αὐτὴν] S M^d αὐτοὶ A
5 πληρώσεως ἢ παρουσίας] <ἢ> πληρώσεως καὶ παρουσίας
Hirschig **7** τρία εἶναι] Hense τρία εἶναι S M^d τρία A εἶδη τὰ
γνωριμώτατα] S M^d sed εἶ in ras. M¹ ἤδη τὰ γνωρίσματα A

Translation

From the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus:

Concerning desire they said the following. This experience is complex in its variety and has the most forms. Some desires are acquired and provided from without, but others are born with us. Desire itself is a certain motion of the soul towards [something], an impulse and longing for filling or for presence of sensation, or for emptying and

for absence and not to perceive. There are three most well known kinds of mistaken and bad desire: shamelessness, lack of proportion and inappropriateness. For either desire is of itself shameful, vulgar, and servile or, while this is not the case, it is stronger and lasts longer than is proper, or thirdly, in addition to these, it occurs when it should not and is directed at things to which it should not be directed.

The Pythagorean Account of Desire

The first point that the Pythagoreans make about desire is that it is greatly varied and changeable (ποικίλον) and has very many forms (πολυειδέστατον). The crucial conclusion that follows from this point is not stated here in fragment 3 but appears in the continuation of the fragment which appears in Iamblichus (fr. 9, lines 80–2): “This emotion is in need of the greatest care, guarding and no ordinary training.” The Pythagoreans initially respond to the complexity of desire and the corresponding necessity of careful training by distinguishing between acquired and inborn desire, providing a definition of desire and identifying three types of mistaken desire. This Pythagorean account of desire does share certain general features with Plato’s and Aristotle’s accounts and some scholars have thus supposed that it was a fabrication of Aristoxenus in light of his understanding of Platonic and Aristotelian ideas (Wehrli 1967: 61). Closer consideration shows, however, that the characteristics shared with Plato and Aristotle are also found in other late fifth- and fourth-century authors. Moreover, there are remarkably original aspects of the account of desire in the *Precepts*. It thus employs certain general concepts characteristic of a range of late fifth- and fourth-century accounts of desire, while at the same time presenting its own distinctive account of desire.

There are several examples of concepts used by the *Precepts* that at first sight appear to be Platonic or Aristotelian but turn out to be the common property of a number of fourth-century accounts of desire. Thus the *Precepts* share with Plato the description of desire as complex in its variety (ποικίλον) and as having many forms (πολυειδέστατον), but this view of desire was not unique to Plato and can be found in Democritus as well (see the commentary on fr. 8, line 13). Both Plato and the *Precepts* use the concepts of filling and depletion in discussing

desire, but once again these concepts are used widely and are particularly prominent in the Hippocratic corpus (see the commentary on lines 4–5). The *Precepts* assert that mistaken desire arises if the desire occurs “when it should not or for things which it should not.” This sounds similar to Aristotle’s description of the mean as doing things at the right time, in the right way, etc. Thus the temperate man does not take pleasure “in things which he should not” or “when he should not” (EN 1119a13–15). Demosthenes, however, uses language that is just as close to the *Precepts* as Aristotle (see the commentary on lines 10–11). The *Precepts* use the term longing (ὄρεξις), which some have supposed to be an original coinage of Aristotle, but it is also found in Democritus (see the commentary on line 4). The *Precepts*, like Plato and Aristotle, make a distinction between what is natural and acquired but do not use either the Platonic or the Aristotelian technical terminology in distinguishing these types of desire (see the commentary on lines 2–3).

The *Precepts* use this common set of concepts to produce something unique. They offer a distinctive definition of desire as “a motion of the soul towards [something]” (ἐπιφοράν τινα τῆς ψυχῆς). Soul is used here in a technical Pythagorean way to refer not to a comprehensive soul that contains all psychic faculties but rather to a specific psychic faculty for emotion (ψυχῆ), which exists alongside faculties for reason (νοῦς) and perception (αἴσθησις). The impulse or longing that constitutes desire is directed not just toward a filling, as in Plato, but also can be for an emptying. The Pythagorean conception involves a sort of balance between being full and being empty, where both filling and emptying can be desirable, in contrast to the Platonic conception where emptying is always destructive (see the commentary on lines 4–5). The *Precepts* also introduce the distinctive idea that human beings can have desires to perceive certain things and not to perceive others. One might think that the “presence of sensation,” which is said to be desired, refers to the sensation that accompanies the filling, but the *Precepts* do not in fact talk of the sensation of filling. The filling and the presence of sensation are listed in parallel as two distinct types of things for which we can long, as are emptying and the absence of sensation. Emptying certainly cannot be identified with lack of sensation; we might well feel a considerable sensation while being emptied. The parallelism between emptying and filling would then suggest that the longing for filling, whether the filling is accompanied by a sensation or not, is distinct from the longing for the

presence of sensation. If we are thirsty we desire to be filled with liquid. Drinking may also produce a pleasant sensation. We might also, however, desire to see something beautiful, which is a pleasant sensation but is not in any obvious way a filling. It thus seems best to conclude that filling and the presence of a sensation and emptying and the absence of sensation are distinct objects towards which our soul can move. The Pythagorean theory of desire is thus not limited to bodily appetites, such as the desires for food and drink, which are easily understood as desires for filling. The Pythagorean theory is more powerful and takes into account desires that are not easily seen as directed at fillings. The desire to hear beautiful music is more easily understood as a desire for a certain sort of perception than for a filling. Moreover, it is more plausible to understand a complex desire, such as the desire to live in Athens, as a desire for a set of perceptions than as a desire for a series of fillings. The account of desire in the *Precepts* also differs from Aristotle's account in not specifying pleasure as the object of desire and the Stoic account in not emphasizing its irrationality (see the commentary on line 1).

The primary division of desires into those that are acquired and produced by external circumstances and those that are present with us at our birth differs significantly in terminology from similar divisions found in Plato, Aristotle and the Epicureans (see the commentary on lines 2–3). The Pythagorean identification of some desires as “born with us” rather than as “natural” is significant in that it appears to distinguish the desires we have at birth from desires that develop naturally over time. These latter desires, while in some sense natural, are usually excessive and must be rejected (see the commentary on fr. 9). The analysis of the three most notable kinds of mistaken desire (shamelessness, lack of proportion, and inappropriateness), with which the fragment ends, is also unparalleled in terminology (see the commentary on lines 6–11). Shamelessness is said to arise when the desire in itself is shameful, vulgar or servile. An example of such a desire would appear to be a desire directed at pleasure. In the discussion of pleasure in the *Precepts*, which is preserved by Iamblichus (fr. 9, lines 59–69), the Pythagoreans say that one should never do anything with pleasure as the aim. Pleasure is then explicitly said to be a shameful (ἀσχημονα) goal. There is a qualification saying that it is only shameful “for the most part,” so that some sorts of pleasures might be acceptable goals, but it is clear that by and large the

desire for pleasure was regarded as shameful. The other two sorts of mistaken desire both arise when there is nothing shameful about the desire itself. Lack of proportion arises when the desire is stronger or lasts longer than is proper. There is nothing wrong with a desire for food but a too strong desire for food or a desire that extends for too long a time is mistaken. Finally, inappropriateness arises when a desire arises at the wrong time or towards the wrong thing. Sexual desire might not be shameful in itself but is inappropriate when we are in public or when directed towards the wrong person.

It is noticeable that, although the Pythagorean account of desire focuses on mistaken desire and seems wary of the complexity of the emotion, it does not espouse an extreme asceticism. There is no blanket condemnation of bodily desire. The identification of ways in which desire can be mistaken clearly implies that there are proper ways to feel desires. The tone is objective and clinical and there are few rhetorical flourishes directed at making the reader distrust desire as such. Fragment 3 sets out the basic principles of the Pythagorean account of desire but in fragment 9, after a restatement of the principles, those principles are elaborated in lines 80–122 so that the reader should consult those lines and the commentary on them in order to gain a full picture of the Pythagorean theory of desire.

Detailed Commentary

Line 1 – **περί δέ**: Aristoxenus frequently uses this phrase plus the genitive to introduce a new section of the *Precepts*. See the discussion of the style of the *Precepts* in the Introduction.

Line 1 – **ἐπιθυμίας**: The earliest uses of this word appear to belong to the latter part of the fifth century, when it is found in Herodotus, Euripides and Thucydides. It becomes more common at the beginning of the fourth century where it is used relatively frequently in Isocrates and Xenophon. It is of course widely used in Plato and Aristotle. Initially, in accordance with its etymology as setting one's heart (θυμός) on (ἐπί) something, it seems to apply to all sorts of desires. In Herodotus, Solon tells Croesus that the rich man is superior to the poor man that has good luck in just two ways; one is precisely that he is more able to achieve (ἐκτελέσαι) his desire (ἐπιθυμίην), which in this case would seem to be anything he sets his heart on (1.32). Thucydides uses the word to refer to a very wide range of desires including a desire for water (2.52) but also the Spartans'

desire to have the men who were captured on Sphacteria returned (5.15), the Athenians' desire to control Sicily (6.33), and the desire of certain Athenian allies to join the Spartan side in the Peloponnesian war (4.81).

Plato does famously name the appetitive part of the soul (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν) after ἐπιθυμία, because of the strength of the desires of this part for food, drink and sex (*Resp.* 580e, cf. 439d), but he also uses ἐπιθυμία quite generally to refer to desires of all sorts and explicitly refers to ἐπιθυμίαι of the rational and spirited part as well (*Resp.* 580d; Lorenz 2006: 45–6). It is only with Aristotle that the word is firmly established as referring only to appetitive desires. Aristotle (e.g., *de An.* 414b2) divides desire (ὄρεξις) into three varieties: wish or rational desire (βούλησις), emotion (θυμός) and appetite (ἐπιθυμία). Appetite (ἐπιθυμία) is distinguished from the other two by its object; it is specifically desire for what is pleasant (τοῦ . . . ἡδέος ὄρεξις, *de An.* 414b5–6; Irwin 1985: 394).

Here in the *Precepts* ἐπιθυμία appears to have the earlier general sense of desire. Certainly there is no explicit distinction established between it and any other sort of desire. The fragment goes on to specify that it is, in part, a longing for a filling or an emptying, which might make it look as if it applied particularly to appetitive desires such as those for food and drink. The other part of the definition, however, specifies that it also is a longing for the presence or absence of a perception. This may well be conceived in such a way as to include all of our desires. Thus, the desire of certain Athenian allies for the Spartan side in the war could be analyzed in terms of a whole series of perceptions which would be different if they were allied with Sparta, such as the perception of having more money in one's treasury as a result of not paying tribute to the Athenians. This may seem far-fetched, but it is important to note that the definition of ἐπιθυμία is decidedly not that of Aristotle, where all ἐπιθυμία is directed at the pleasant. Pleasure is not mentioned at all in the section of the *Precepts* on desire; it does not appear here in fragment 3 or in fragment 9, lines 71–122. Thus perception does not appear to be a stand-in for pleasure or pain, but rather to refer to the full range of experiences that an individual can have.

Line 1 – ἔλεγον: One manuscript (S) has the singular ἔλεγεν, but Hense is right to follow two other manuscripts (M^d A) that have the plural ἔλεγον. When Iamblichus presents this same material at *VP* 205 he reports it as what τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐκείνους say, so that the plural was clearly found in his text of the *Precepts* as well. The evidence as a whole shows that the *Precepts* were presented as what the Pythagoreans as a group said rather than what Pythagoras said (see [Chapter 3](#) in the Introduction).

Lines 1–2 – ποικίλον καὶ πολυειδέστατον: The first adjective which the Pythagoreans chose to describe desire, ποικίλον, is difficult to translate into English but it is clearly central to the Pythagorean account of desire since it is used three more times in the extended discussion of desire in fragment 9 (lines 87, 103 and 105). In its non-metaphorical uses, it is used to describe animals that are many-colored or spotted and artwork that is intricately wrought, embroidered or highly decorated. Here in its metaphorical application to desire it emphasizes that desire is a phenomenon that shows great variety and considerable changeability. There are overtones of something that is complex, hard to understand, chaotic and unreliable (for a more detailed discussion of ποικίλον see the commentary on fr. 8, line 13). In fragment 8 the adjective and its cognate noun are used to describe human nature in general and it is clear that human beings have this nature because of their desires (see lines 13–14 where the creature is described as ποικίλον κατὰ τε τὰς ὁρμὰς καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας καὶ κατὰ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν παθῶν). Here in fragment 3, to this complex adjective is added the more direct, πολυειδέστατον, which indicates that desire has “the greatest number of forms” of any human experience.

Two manuscripts of Stobaeus read ποικίλον καὶ πολύπονον καὶ πολυειδέστατον rather than simply ποικίλον καὶ πολυειδέστατον. Iamblichus gives evidence only for ποικίλον καὶ πολυειδέστατον. Πολύπονος appears a number of times in Greek tragedy and is particularly used of mortals “who have many toils” (πολύπονοι βροτοί – e.g., Euripides, *Orestes* 175). It is rarer in prose and appears only once each in Plato and Aristotle. Its sole appearance in the Hippocratic corpus refers to a disease as “full of pain” (*Affections* 23.12). It becomes more common in later prose. It seems likely that it was originally a gloss used to indicate that ποικίλος was being used in a negative sense (i.e. not just “varied” but “causing many pains”) and came to be included in the text through a copyist’s error.

Lines 2–3 – τὰς μὲν ἐπικτήτους τε καὶ παρασκευαστάς, τὰς δὲ συμφύτους: The adjective ἐπικτήτος appears to be used first by Herodotus and literally refers to something that is acquired (κτάομαι) in addition or subsequently (ἐπί). He uses it in his famous description of the land of Egypt as the gift of the Nile (2.5); the area was originally covered with water but the land was acquired subsequently (ἐπικτήτος . . . γῆ) through the silting action of the river. Thus ἐπικτήτους here refers to desires that we have acquired during our lives in addition or subsequently to the desires we were born with or that belong to us naturally.

A TLG search reveals no parallels for the pairing of παρασκευαστός (or the variant κατεσκευασμένος used by Iamblichus in fr. 9) with ἐπικτήτος. This is largely because παρασκευαστός is a rare word appearing four times in Plato and

then not again until the fourth century AD and later, when it appears a handful of times. All four uses in Plato are in the *Protagoras*, where it is used three times in one passage by Protagoras to describe virtue as something that is teachable (διδασκτόν) and that can be procured (παράσκευαστόν – 324a5, c4, c7). Shortly before this, at 319b2, Socrates has expressed his scepticism that it can be taught and provided by men to men (ὅπ’ ἀνθρώπων παράσκευαστόν ἀνθρώποις). This last construction suggests that what is παράσκευαστός is thought of as specifically provided by or procured from others. In the *Precepts* then, the idea would appear to be that some desires are acquired (ἐπικτήτους) in the sense that they did not belong to us at birth and that at least some of these are provided to us by others (παράσκευαστάς). These latter desires would be desires that are created by society as a whole and that we learn from society. They would include desires for luxuries of various sorts that are generated by a competition for precedence with others, as is suggested by the examples of superfluous pleasures given in fragment 9, lines 93–110.

It was probably the rarity of the word that led Iamblichus to replace it with κατεσκευασμένος in fragment 9, line 79. In doing so, however, he slightly changes the meaning of the passage. This verb can mean “to fabricate” and the construction that Iamblichus uses with it indicates that the point is that some human desires, far from being inborn, have been fabricated by men themselves (κατεσκευασμένους ὅπ’ αὐτῶν τῶν ἀνθρώπων). Thus, Iamblichus’ text emphasizes that we are ourselves responsible for our superfluous desires, whereas the *Precepts* put more emphasis on their being provided by the surrounding society.

The Pythagorean distinction between desires that are natural (συμφύτους) and desires that are acquired and provided (ἐπικτήτους τε καὶ παρασκευαστάς) is paralleled by similar distinctions in Plato (*Resp.* 558d), Aristotle (*EN* 1118b8) and later philosophers such as Epicurus (*Ep. Men.* 127–32; *Sent. Vat.* 29). On the other hand, the *Pythagorean Precepts* do not use the vocabulary which Plato and Aristotle use in developing the distinction. Plato distinguishes between desires that are necessary and those that are not (*Resp.* 558d: ἀναγκαίους ἐπιθυμίας καὶ τὰς μὴ) and Aristotle between desires that are common to all and others that are peculiar to individuals and adventitious (*EN* 1118b8: κοινὰ [= φυσικὰ] . . . ἴδιοι καὶ ἐπίθετοι). Epicurus distinguishes between desires that are natural, necessary or empty (*Ep. Men.* 127–32 φυσικὰ, ἀναγκαῖα, κενὰ), although he does not use συμφύτους as the Pythagoreans do (see further the commentary on fr. 9, line 83).

The expression ἐπικτήτους τε καὶ παρασκευαστάς appears to be unique to the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Both Plato and Aristotle do contrast τὰ ἐπικτήτα (“acquired things”) with “natural things” (τὰ φύσει ὄντα *Pl. Resp.* 618d) and in three places Aristotle uses the same words for the basic contrast as the *Precepts*, τὰ ἐπικτήτα and τὰ σύμφυτα (*GA* 721b30; *Po.* 1454b23; *Pr.* 883a7), but none of

these passages in Plato and Aristotle involve a classification of desires. In the three passages mentioned, Aristotle distinguishes between congenital characteristics of people and acquired ones, tokens used in recognition in tragedy that are inborn, such as a birthmark, and those that are acquired such as a scar or a necklace, and finally between a person's natural bodily heat and acquired heat.

Lines 3–4 – τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἐπιφορὰν τίνα τῆς ψυχῆς: The most distinctive thing about the definition of desire in the *Pythagorean Precepts* is the initial description of it as “a certain motion of the soul towards [something].” The word that I translate “motion towards,” ἐπιφορά, is not paralleled in any other discussions of ἐπιθυμία by Greek philosophers. The word appears once in Thucydides, twice in Plato and once each in Aristotle and in Theophrastus, so that it was clearly in use in the fifth and fourth centuries, but not very common. The related verb, ἐπιφέρω, is more common and has the basic meaning of “to bring or put upon,” or in the passive “to attack.” Thus the basic meaning of the noun is “a bringing to or upon” (LSJ). In some cases it indicates that something additional is brought. Thus, in Thucydides it refers to extra pay offered to rowers by the trierarchs beyond the pay given by the state; it is something put upon or added to regular pay. Similarly it can mean a second course of food or an additional payment of tribute (LSJ s.v.). In other cases, however, it indicates simply the application of one thing to another whether what is applied is additional or not. In both uses of the noun in Plato and the one in Aristotle, it refers to the “putting of a name on something” i.e. the application of a name to something (Pl. *Lg.* 944b, *Cra.* 430d). In the *Poetics*, Aristotle defines metaphor as “the application (ἐπιφορά) [to one thing] of a word that belongs to another thing.” In the expression “the day’s old age” (a metaphorical expression for evening), the term “old age,” which belongs properly to something else (e.g. a person), is “applied” to day (1457b7 ff.). It can also refer to a more literal application of something as in the application or infliction of blows (LSJ s.v.). The noun also has a passive sense referring to what has been brought on, e.g., an offering, an attack, a blast of wind, or a burst of rain. In some cases it can emphasize the succession of things brought on, as in its medical meaning of a persistent flow of tears (LSJ s.v.). In the third century AD, the rhetorician Menander will use it of propensities (ἐπιφοράς) that someone has towards something (342.9). Thucydides uses the adjective ἐπιφορός to describe the wind as “heading” or “tending” in a certain direction (3.74), thus emphasizing the directedness of the motion. Later the noun will be used in rhetoric to refer to a second clause, by Epicurus with the meanings “conclusion” and “reference” (Arrighetti 1973: fr. 29.31.6) and by the Stoics to refer to the conclusion of an argument (von Arnim 1903: fr. 241), evidently as something that is “brought on” by the premises.

Another Stoic usage can, surprisingly, help us to understand what the Pythagoreans might have meant by ἐπιφορά. In the account of Stoic ethics found in Stobaeus and deriving from Arius Didymus, impulse (ὁρμή) is defined as “a motion of the soul towards something” (φορὰν ψυχῆς ἐπὶ τι) and a rational impulse as “a motion of thought towards something in the realm of action” (φορὰν διανοίας ἐπὶ τι τῶν ἐν τῷ πράττειν – Stob. 2.7.9. I am indebted to Hendrik Lorenz for this reference). There are no direct parallels with the *Pythagorean Precepts* here. The Stoics are not defining ἐπιθυμία as the Pythagoreans are but rather ὁρμή. Indeed, the Stoic definition of ἐπιθυμία as an ὁρεξις that is disobedient to reason (Stob. 2.7.10b) is quite different from the definition here in the *Precepts*. Nor is there any trace in the *Precepts* of the Stoic distinctions between rational and irrational impulses. Thus, there is no reason to think that this passage of the *Precepts* was forged at a later date in light of Stoic ideas. Yet, while the Stoics do not actually use the term ἐπιφορά, their description of an impulse as a φορὰ ψυχῆς ἐπὶ τι appears quite similar in conception to the Pythagorean idea of ἐπιθυμία as an ἐπιφορά τῆς ψυχῆς and can give us insight into what a Greek would have understood when confronting the coined term ἐπιφορά. The Stoic usage suggests that it might have been heard as meaning “a motion toward,” with it being understood that it is “a motion towards (something).” In fact, the *Precepts* appear to make an early contribution to a trend in Greek psychology that sees the soul as actively reaching out towards the external world. Thus, in addition to the Stoics, the Epicureans also understood certain psychic activities as “applications” of psychic faculties to the phenomena and used a noun with the prefix ἐπι- to convey this idea, although their term of choice was ἐπιβολή (“projection upon”) rather than ἐπιφορά. Most famously, Epicurus used the expression ἐπιβολή τῆς διανοίας to refer to “the apprehension by the mind” of images and concepts, although he also uses ἐπιβολή to refer to apprehension by the senses (see Bailey 1928: 265).

Here in the *Precepts*, Aristoxenus (or the Pythagoreans) marks the term ἐπιφοράν as unusual, at least in its application to the soul, by the addition of τινα, “a certain.” Furthermore, after saying that desire is ἐπιφοράν τινα of the soul, Aristoxenus immediately adds “and an impulse and a longing,” so that it is likely that these latter terms are intended to further explain the unusual word ἐπιφοράν. This reference to impulse and longings supports the interpretation suggested above of ἐπιφορά as a motion of the soul towards something, perhaps with the overtones of a forceful motion suggested by the use of the term to describe a blast of wind or a burst of rain. Such a forceful understanding of the word is supported by the use of ὁρμή to further explain the Pythagorean concept of ἐπιθυμία, since ὁρμή can mean “onrush” as well as “impulse” (see the next note). It probably goes too far to translate ἐπιφορά as “a certain burst of soul”. “Propensity” or “inclination” are safer translations but they suggest a potential

for action rather than the actual action implied by ἐπιφορά and are tame enough meanings that there would be little reason for Aristoxenus to mark the usage as unusual by adding τινά. It also seems possible that the ἐπι- in ἐπιφορά is meant to allude to the ἐπι- in the word that it is defining, ἐπιθυμία. Thus, the Pythagorean definition picks up on the understanding of ἐπιθυμία as directing of the θυμός to (ἐπι) something, by defining it as a motion of the soul towards (ἐπι) something.

There is an interesting parallel in a passage in pseudo-Plutarch's *De Musica*, which supports this translation (1144b). What is noteworthy about the passage is that it comes from a section of the *De Musica* that is generally recognized as deriving from Aristoxenus (Barker 2007: 331) and that therefore might reflect Aristoxenus' usage. Moreover, while it does not mention an ἐπιφορά of the soul, it refers to an ἐπιφορά of a faculty of the soul, αἴσθησις. The argument in this passage is that three smallest components strike the ear simultaneously when listening to sung music, i.e. what are called the note, the time and the syllable. From the notes we recognize the harmonic structure, from the time the rhythm and from the syllable the words of the song. It is thus necessary that, since these three elements advance together in the song, the listener "make (ποιεῖσθαι) the motion or application of his perception toward [all three] (τὴν τῆς αἰσθήσεως ἐπιφοράν) together" (ἅμα). Here then, the expression ἐπιφοράν ποιεῖσθαι seems to indicate that perception is conceived of as being applied to or as coming upon its object. This idea is similar to that proposed above for the *Precepts* where desire is seen as a motion of soul towards something. If this passage of the *De Musica* does represent Aristoxenus' usage it appears that he might have been influenced by the Pythagorean account of desire, which he reports in this passage of the *Precepts*, in his own account of perception. The pseudo-Platonic *Definitions* (414c5) define *aisthesis* as "a motion of the soul" (ψυχῆς φορά).

The added point that the ἐπιφορά, which constitutes desire, is specifically an ἐπιφορά of the soul (τῆς ψυχῆς) has, at first sight, a Platonic ring to it. As emphasized above, Plato does not use the word ἐπιφορά, but he does famously stress in the *Philebus* that "all impulse and desire belongs to the soul" (ψυχῆς σύμπασαν τὴν τε ὀρμὴν καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν) rather than to the body (35d2). It is not clear, however, that this is the point of the addition of τῆς ψυχῆς in the *Precepts*. Certainly there is no contrast between body and soul in what survives of fragment 8 or in the continuation of the fragment in fragment 9, so the point of adding τῆς ψυχῆς may not be that desire belongs to the soul rather than the body. What then is the point of the specification? It is probably a specification of what psychic faculty is responsible for desire. The Pythagoreans who are responsible for the *Precepts* are reported to be pupils of Philolaus and Eurytus (Aristoxenus in Diog. Laert. 8.46). Fragment 13 of Philolaus gives a classification of psychic faculties according to which ψυχή is not the name for the soul as a whole but rather for a specific psychic faculty that is located in the heart along with the

faculty of perception (αἴσθησις). The evidence suggests that for Philolaus ψυχή was the faculty that dealt precisely with desires and emotions (Huffman 2009). Thus, the fourth-century students of Philolaus, who put together the *Precepts*, are quite reasonably saying in fragment 3 that desire is “some motion towards” of the psychic faculty that is responsible for emotions and desires (ψυχή), rather than a motion of one of the other psychic faculties identified by Philolaus, such as intellect (νοῦς) or perception (αἴσθησις). It is probably the case that all of these faculties are conceived of as being bodily and that the distinction between body and soul, which is central to Plato, is not at issue here in the *Precepts*.

Lines 4 – ὁρμήν καὶ ὄρεξιν: The definition of desire as an application of the soul is now further explained as an “impulse and a longing.” In accordance with its use here as part of the definition of desire, ὁρμή is used elsewhere in the *Precepts* alongside of the word desire as a close synonym. Thus, in fragment 8 a human being is said to show a complex variety “in its impulses, desires, and the rest of its emotions” (κατὰ τε τὰς ὁρμὰς καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας καὶ κατὰ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν παθῶν). It is also used in the context of desires in fragment 9, line 38. The cognate verb appears in such a context in fragment 10, line 26. The use of ὁρμή to mean “onrush” or “impulse” is common in Greek and goes back to the earliest times. In Homer it refers to the onrush of a warrior (*Il.* 9.355) and Empedocles talks of “the benevolent, immortal onrush of love” (35.13). Herodotus refers to a divine impulse for the Greeks to be destroyed (7.18).

ὄρεξις, “longing,” on the other hand, only becomes common with Aristotle where it is a technical term for desire, which is subdivided into appetite (ἐπιθυμία), passion (θυμός) and wish (βούλησις – *de An.* 414b2). Some scholars have been quick to see evidence of Aristotelian influence here and see Aristoxenus as inventing or at least rewriting Pythagorean ethics in Aristotelian terms (Täger 1922: 61–2). But, while the word ὄρεξις is used, the *Precepts* employ neither the threefold division of ὄρεξις nor Aristotle’s own definition of ἐπιθυμία as desire for what is pleasant (τοῦ ἡδέος ὄρεξις – *de An.* 414b5–6). Pleasure, indeed, is integral to Aristotle’s account of ἐπιθυμία (Irwin 1985: 394). Thus it is significant that the *Precepts* make no mention of pleasure anywhere in their account of desire (fr. 3 and fr. 9, lines 71–122), nor do they mention desire in their account of pleasure (fr. 9, lines 59–69).

Nussbaum has argued that ὄρεξις is an Aristotelian coinage (1986: 273–6). If we could be certain that Aristotle was the first to use ὄρεξις, then we would have to suppose that this section of the *Pythagorean Precepts* was written under Aristotelian influence so that it could not, at least in its entirety, be ascribed to the Pythagoreans of the first half of the fourth century. As noted in the previous paragraph, however, none of the other features of Aristotelian ὄρεξις appear in

the *Precepts*, which is surprising if it was composed with Aristotle in mind. Moreover, as Nussbaum notes, although the word becomes suddenly common in Aristotle, it does appear three times in the ethical fragments of Democritus (born c. 460 BC), which if genuine would date to the late fifth or the first part of the fourth century and hence before Aristotle. The authenticity of the ethical fragments of Democritus is controversial and Nussbaum suggests that the appearance of *δρεξις* in them is further evidence for post-Aristotelian redaction of them. Yet, other than the sudden frequent use of the term in Aristotle, there is no other suggestion that it is his own coinage, i.e. he does not call attention to it as such. Moreover, the usage of *δρεξις* in Democritus, like the usage in the *Precepts*, shows none of the other characteristic features of Aristotle's usage of the term. It is not presented as the general term for "object directed, active inner reaching-out" (Nussbaum's definition, 1986: 275) and subdivided into appetite, passion and wish. Instead Democritus seems to use it as a synonym for *ἐπιθυμία*. Thus in fragment 284, Democritus first uses the verb *ἐπιθυμέω* but then uses *δρεξις* as the equivalent noun, when he says, "If you do not desire (*ἐπιθυμήις*) many things, few will seem many to you. For desire that is small (*σ μικρὰ γὰρ δρεξις*) makes poverty equal to wealth." Fragment 72 says, "Strong desires (*δρέξεις*) for something blind the soul to other things," where again Democritus is likely to have appetites in mind. Finally, in fragment 219, Democritus says, "desire for money (*χρημάτων δρεξις*), if it is not limited by surfeit, is much more difficult than extreme poverty, for greater desires (*μέζονες δρέξεις*) produce greater wants." Here again it seems likely that the desire for money is connected to the appetites as it is in Plato.

The noun *δρεξις* clearly derives from the verb *δρέγω*, which with the genitive means to reach at or grasp at something, or metaphorically to reach after, yearn for or desire. LSJ notes that the metaphorical sense is frequently found in Attic prose and cites passages in Antiphon, Thucydides and Plato. The verb appears in the metaphorical sense three times in the fragments of Democritus (frs. 201, 202 and 205). Given the frequent use of the verb in the metaphorical sense in fifth- and early fourth-century prose, it does not seem surprising that Democritus or someone else in this period should have introduced the corresponding noun form *δρεξις*.

As long as the authenticity of the ethical fragments of Democritus is uncertain, it is not possible to be sure whether Democritus anticipated Aristotle in using the term *δρεξις*. However, while the evidence apart from Democritus and the *Pythagorean Precepts* is consistent with Aristotle's having been the first to coin the term, it is equally plausible that he took a relatively rare word that had been used both by Democritus and the Pythagoreans and adopted it as his general term for desire. Indeed, Aristotle's failure to emphasize the novelty of the term

makes it more likely that he was using a term that his audience would understand, even if it was rare, than that he was coining a new term.

Lines 5–6 – πληρώσεως ἢ παρουσίας αἰσθήσεως, ἢ κενώσεως καὶ ἀπουσίας καὶ τοῦ μὴ αἰσθάνεσθαι: The opposition between filling (πληρώσεως) and depletion (κενώσεως), which is part of the definition of desire in fragment 3, is found in Plato’s account of desire in the *Philebus*, where thirst is analyzed as emptiness (κένωσις) and the thirsty man as desiring filling (πληρώσεως – 35b). Thirst is defined as an ἐπιθυμία πληρώσεως (34e–35a). Such an analysis of desire is, in fact, found in several passages in Plato (*Resp.* 439d, 585b; *Ly.* 215e). Later in the *Philebus*, Plato identifies pains and pleasures as arising from the departures from and returns to natural conditions; one way in which such departures and returns occur is said to be through fillings and emptyings (πληρώσεσι καὶ κενώσεσι – 42c–d; see also *Ti.* 64d and *Grg.* 496e). When this point was first introduced earlier in the dialogue (31d–32b), it is interesting that the natural state which is destroyed and restored is said to be composed of the limit and the unlimited (32a), which is a reference to Philolaus’ basic metaphysical scheme, which Plato admits to borrowing from “men before our time” (16c; see Huffman 2001). It might thus be tempting to suppose that, along with that metaphysical distinction, Plato is borrowing a Pythagorean theory of desire framed in terms of emptying and filling such as appears here in fragment 3. Plato, has however, been relatively careful in the *Philebus* in identifying where he is borrowing and where he is not, so that it seems unlikely that he is simply taking over a Pythagorean theory wholesale. Moreover, no theory of a natural state based on the harmony of limiter and unlimited is found anywhere in the *Precepts*.

Some have wanted to see the similarity between Plato and fragment 3 of the *Precepts* not as a sign of Plato’s borrowing but rather as evidence that Aristoxenus was drawing on Plato to construct the Pythagorean view of desire (Wehrli 1967: 61). It is more likely, however, that both Plato and the Pythagoreans are drawing on a widespread tradition that analyzed the functioning of the body in terms of emptying and filling. Such an analysis is extremely common in the Hippocratic corpus. Plato himself attests to the importance of the concepts of emptying and filling in the medical tradition when, in the *Symposium* (186c), he has Eryximachus define medicine as “knowledge of the loves of the body with regard to filling and emptying” (ἐπιστήμη τῶν τοῦ σώματος ἐρωτικῶν πρὸς πλησμονὴν καὶ κένωσιν). *On Ancient Medicine* (9–10) treats depletion (κενώσις) and repletion (πληρώσις) of the body with regard to food as a complex but central issue facing the doctor in determining proper treatment. Several texts make the point that diseases caused by repletion are cured by depletion and the reverse (*Aph.* 2.22; *Nat. Hom.* 9; *Flat.* 1). In other cases convulsions are said to be caused by repletion and depletion (*Aph.* 6.39).

Diseases 4 explains pleasure and pain in terms of a replenishment and depletion theory (39.5; Wolfsdorf 2013: 35–7). There are many other instances of the use of this opposition in the Hippocratic corpus. None of these passages are definitions of desire so that they are not exact parallels for what is found in fragment 3 and Plato. However, they do define basic bodily functions in terms of emptying and filling. Surely it is a natural step to define desire in terms of this analysis of bodily functioning and both the Pythagoreans and Plato could have done so independently. Some testimonia for Empedocles suggest that he too had analyzed desire in terms of the filling of a deficiency (A95 – Gosling and Taylor 1982: 16–25) but there are doubts about the reliability of this testimony (Wolfsdorf 2009). Thus, Plato and the *Pythagorean Precepts* need not be dependent on one another and may both be drawing on a Greek analysis of bodily functioning and desire in terms of filling and depletion that was particularly common in the medical tradition.

The independence of the *Precepts* from Plato's account of desire is shown by a marked difference between the Pythagorean and Platonic account of desire. The *Precepts* clearly indicate that desires arise for both fillings and emptyings. Plato, on the other hand, while employing emptying and filling as crucial components in his account of desire and pleasure, always presents emptyings as causes of pain and fillings as causes of pleasure and hence always presents desire as for a filling and never for an emptying. It is true that at *Philebus* 35c Plato talks of desire arising because the animal undertakes to bring about the opposite of the actual condition of the body. Stated in this general way, one might suppose that Plato would agree that, if the body were too full, it would desire to bring about the opposite and thus desire an emptying. Nonetheless, neither in the *Philebus* nor in the *Gorgias* or *Republic* does Plato discuss the possibility of desire being for an emptying; the model assumed is always that of a filling an emptiness (*Grg.* 493a–494c; *Resp.* 585a–e). At *Resp.* 585d the pleasant is defined as “to be filled (πληροῦσθαι) with what befits nature.” There is no mention of any pleasure in emptying that could be desired. The reason for this appears to be Plato's analysis of pain as a destruction of a natural state and pleasure as a restoration of that state (*Phlb.* 31d–32b). Destruction is naturally associated with tearing something down and emptying it and restoration with rebuilding and filling. This model then makes it nonsensical to talk of a desire for destruction or emptying. The *Precepts* seem to be employing a different model according to which what is desired is a balance between emptying and filling so that both filling and emptying can be desired in order to achieve the best state. This model has clear similarities to the use of emptying and filling in the Hippocratic corpus (see the passages cited in the preceding paragraph).

The further definition of desire in terms of a longing for the presence (παρουσίας αἰσθήσεως) or absence (ἀπουσίας) of a perception seems to be

unique to this passage of the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Plato does emphasize in the *Philebus* that bodily changes such as emptyings and fillings are not themselves to be identified with pleasure or pain (43a–c). They only constitute pleasures and pains if we perceive (43b αἰσθάνεται) these changes. Thus, Plato would seem to be committed to the idea that our desire is not just for restoration of the body to its proper state by filling but to perceive that filling. Thus, whether the perception of a filling or emptying is present or not is important to Plato. The *Pythagorean Precepts* say nothing about the presence of a perception of filling, however. The filling and emptying, on the one hand, and the presence or absence of a perception, on the other, are treated as distinct objects of desire. No examples of these two sorts of desire are given, but it is easy to provide some which show that the Pythagorean theory might have been more satisfying than a theory that appealed just to the concepts of filling and emptying. Certainly the central human desires for food and drink fit the model of emptying and filling very well, but many other cases of desire fit such a model less well. Thus, we may have a desire to see a beautiful person or object and it surely makes more sense to analyze this as a desire for a certain sensation than as a desire for a filling. Similarly the desire to avoid an unpleasant smell is better described as desiring the absence of a perception or not to perceive something than as a desire for an emptying. Indeed complex desires (e.g., to live in Athens) could be reasonably analyzed as desires for a certain combination of perceptions and less plausibly analyzed as desires for a variety of fillings.

In the fifth century παρουσία is used to refer to the presence of a person but also, as here in the *Precepts*, to the presence of things, e.g., the presence of evils (E. *Hec.* 227). Aristotle does not use παρουσία and ἀπουσία as part of his general account of desire but he does refer to the presence and absence of certain sensations such as heat and cold (*Mete.* 382a33). Thus, the definition of desire in terms of a longing for the presence or absence of a sensation is unique to the *Precepts* but is in accord with fifth- and fourth-century Greek usage of παρουσία and ἀπουσία.

Lines 5–6 – ἀπουσίας καὶ τοῦ μὴ αἰσθάνεσθαι: The καὶ here is most easily understood as equivalent to “i.e.”; this makes the second half of the account of desire parallel to the first. In the first part there are two objects of desire: filling and presence of sensation. In the second part there are also two objects: emptying and absence of sensation. In the second half of the sentence, absence of sensation might be misunderstood as the sensation of an absence and καὶ τοῦ μὴ αἰσθάνεσθαι is added to explain that by absence of a sensation the Pythagoreans mean not to perceive. In both the case of presence of sensation and also of absence of sensation there is an ambiguity as to whether the desire is to perceive (or not perceive) in general or whether the desire is for a specific

sensation (or for the absence of a specific sensation). Presumably the latter is meant, since human beings do as a matter of fact desire not just to perceive or not perceive in general but also to perceive and not perceive specific things.

Lines 6–11 – ἐπιθυμίας δὲ ἡμαρτημένης . . . The three most well-known kinds of mistaken or bad desire are said to be shamelessness (ἀσχημοσύνη), lack of proportion (ἀσυμμετρία) and inappropriateness (ἀκαιρία). The use of this trio of abstract nouns together is not paralleled in any ancient text. As abstract nouns all three appear to come into common use only in the fourth century, although there are indications that some were used in the fifth century as well, so that there is no problem in assuming that Pythagoreans of the first half of the fourth century used them.

The independence of the *Precepts* from Plato and Aristotle is particularly clear in the case of the central term ἀσχημοσύνη. It does appear in both the Hippocratic Corpus (*Decent*. 2.1) and Aeschines (3.76.7) with the same meaning as here in the *Precepts*, i.e. what is morally unseemly or shameless, so that such a usage was available in the fourth century. However, it appears only four times in all of Aristotle and three of the uses refer to physical lack of shape or misshapeness (*Ph.* 188b20), while only one usage refers to unseemly moral behavior (*EN* 1126b33). Plato uses the word more frequently, ten times, but almost all of these usages refer to physical awkwardness or lack of grace (e.g., *Resp.* 401a) and the moral sense is rare (*Leg.* 648e). The adjective ἀσχήμων is more common than the noun and appears particularly to refer to unseemly behavior spurred by anger (*Hdt.* 7.160; *Eur.* fr. 259 Nauck). It appears seventeen times in Plato and in several cases does refer to unseemly moral behavior (*Resp.* 401b; *Cri.* 53c8), but it is again very rare in Aristotle, appearing only three times, twice with the moral sense in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1123a33, 1127b13). Aristoxenus appears to have been influenced by this Pythagorean usage, since the noun appears at an important point in his *Life of Socrates*, where Socrates is described as capable of “terrible shamelessness” (δεινὴν ἀσχημοσύνην) when overcome by anger (fr. 54a, fr. 54b, fr. 56 Wehrli).

Similarly ἀσυμμετρία, which is also used in fragment 2 of the *Pythagorean Precepts*, appears to be an important term in the *Precepts* while being very rare and unimportant in Plato and Aristotle (see the note on fr. 2, line 18). It probably first appears in the fourth century, although there is a chance that it may go back to Empedocles, since Theophrastus uses it twice to describe an Empedoclean doctrine (*DK* 1.303.32 and 34). Here in fragment 3 the term is in effect defined in what follows as what is stronger or lasts longer than is proper (σφοδρότερον δὲ καὶ χρονιώτερον τοῦ προσήκοντος), so it refers to excess quantity, either at a specific time or over time. Theophrastus uses the term, in a similar way to

that found in the *Pythagorean Precepts*, to refer to disproportion in quantity, i.e. too much or too little food or too wet or too dry weather (*CP* 3.22.3.3).

The case of ἀκαίρια is similar to that of ἀσχημοσύνη and ἀσυμμετρία. It may first appear in Democritus in the late fifth century (fr. 26e) and is used some twenty times in the fourth century including seven appearances in the orators. Yet, it is not an important term for Plato or Aristotle. It appears only four times in Plato, once with a clear moral sense of inappropriate behavior of vulgar lovers (*Sym.* 182a), but in another case it refers just to unseasonable weather (*Leg.* 709a). The word appears just once in Aristotle where it refers to unseasonable winds (*Pr.* 941b25). In the Hippocratic corpus it refers to treatment that is given at the wrong time, e.g., treatment that is given at noon when it should be done early in the day (*Morb.* 1.5.23). This reference to doing something at the wrong time is clearly one of the senses intended here in fragment 3 of the *Precepts*, since ἀκαίρια with regard to desire is explained in line 10 as desire that occurs “when it should not.” The concept of καίρος is central in fragment 10 of the *Precepts* and the commentary there should be consulted for further analysis that is relevant to the concept of ἀκαίρια. In fragment 10 it is not in fact the emphasis on something’s occurring at the right or wrong time that is prominent but rather that one acts appropriately given the characteristics of the person one is dealing with. This is paralleled by the second sense of ἀκαίρια mentioned in line 11 here, which involves desires that are directed at things to which they should not be directed. The most interesting parallel to the *Precepts* is Theophrastus’ use of the word as the title for one of his *Characters* (12). Theophrastus’ use of the term to refer to someone who does something at the wrong time or to an inappropriate person fits very well the description in the *Pythagorean Precepts* as something that “occurs when it should not and [that] is directed at things to which it should not be directed.” The major difference between Theophrastus and the *Precepts* is that in the *Characters* ἀκαίρια applies to awkward social situations rather than to serious moral dilemmas and can well be translated “lack of tact.” One example is someone who interrupts a busy friend to ask advice. No examples of ἀκαίρια of desire are given here in the *Precepts* but since the topic is the morally charged concept of desire, it seems likely that the Pythagoreans saw ἀκαίρια as more than a lack of tact.

In his discussion of desires in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle also discusses errors regarding desires (1118b15 ff.). There are some similarities in content to fragment 3, which are inevitable given the similarity of subject matter, but on the whole Aristotle’s account is quite distinct from what we find in fragment 3. Aristotle discusses errors regarding desires in terms of 1) his distinction between natural and peculiar desires and says that 2) few people err in the case of natural desires and 3) only in one way, that of excess quantity. There is no parallel in fragment 3 for these points. In the case of desire peculiar to individuals, Aristotle

says (EN 1118b23) that people err by delighting 1) in things they should not, 2) more than most people or 3) not as they should (χαίρειν οἷς μὴ δεῖ, ἢ τῷ μάλλον ἢ ὥς οἱ πολλοί, ἢ μὴ ὥς δεῖ). Wehrli (1967: 61) compares this threefold division to the threefold division of mistaken desire in the *Precepts*. Täger (1922: 63) points to the related threefold division a few pages later in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1119b16), where the temperate man is said to desire “1) the things that he should, 2) as he should and 3) when he should” (ὧν δεῖ καὶ ὥς δεῖ καὶ ὅτε) and argues that in the *Precepts* Aristoxenus was assigning the doctrine of his teacher to the Pythagoreans (so also Mewaldt 1904: 53–4). The difficulty with this is that Aristotle nowhere presents as definite a threefold division as the *Precepts* do. He nowhere asserts that there are three types of mistaken desires. In the two passages just cited he does list three ways in which the profligate man goes wrong and three ways in which the temperate man’s desires are right, but even here the lists do not correspond exactly. In the first case emphasis is put on desiring things more than one should and this is not mentioned in the second case, just as there is no mention of desiring things when one should in the first case as there is in the second. Aristotle is simply not interested in giving a precisely delineated account of the number of ways one can be mistaken regarding desires, and discusses the issue in different ways in different contexts. Moreover, while in these two passages he happens to mention three ways in which people are right or wrong about desires, in other passages he gives a list of five ways (ὅτε δεῖ καὶ ἐφ’ οἷς καὶ πρὸς οὓς καὶ οὐ ἔνεκα καὶ ὥς δεῖ – EN 1106b21–2), so that for Aristotle there is clearly no fixed idea of how many ways we can be mistaken about desire as there is in the *Precepts*.

In summary, both Aristotle and the *Precepts* agree in recognizing some of the same ways in which human beings can go wrong concerning desire, i.e. that they can desire the wrong things or too much or at the wrong time. There is some inevitable similarity in language when discussing these issues (see the note on lines 10–11 below). Nonetheless, the precise threefold division of mistaken desires in the *Precepts* and the language used to describe it (ἀσχημοσύνην ἀσυμμετρίαν, ἀκαίριαν) are not found in Aristotle and there is no good reason to assume that Aristoxenus derived this section of the *Precepts* from Aristotle rather than from the fourth-century Pythagoreans with whom he associated.

Line 9 – φορτικὴν καὶ ἀνελεύθερον: Both of these adjectives go back to the fifth century and appear, e.g., in Aristophanes. The adjective φορτικός refers to people or things that are regarded as vulgar or common. Aristotle calls the many “most vulgar” (φορτικώτατοι), since they regard pleasure as the good in contrast to the cultured (χαρίεντες), who regard honor as the good (EN 1095b16–23). He also contrasts the φορτικοί with the educated (πεπαιδευμένος – Arist. *Pol.* 1342a20). In the *Republic*, Plato says that the man who loves honor will regard the pleasure

that arises from money as something vulgar (φορτικὴν). The adjective ἀνελεύθερος indicates what is characteristic of someone who is not a free person, i.e. something that is “servile” or “mean.” Aristotle gives as examples of servile professions (ἀνελευθέρους ἐργασίας) brothel-keepers and small-time usurers (EN 1121b33–4). Pausanias, in his speech in the *Symposium* of Plato, says that the lover can get away with behavior that his enemies would normally revile as servility (ἀνελευθερίας), such as supplications and entreaties (183b). Thus, the first sort of mistaken desire is a desire that is in itself “unseemly, vulgar and servile.”

Lines 10–11 – ὅτε οὐ δεῖ καὶ πρὸς ἃ οὐ δεῖ: Expressions such as this, where δεῖ is used to indicate what “should” be done are found fairly frequently in Aristotle and appear in prominent discussions of his famous doctrine of the mean. To feel emotions, “when we should, about the things we should, towards the people we should, for the reasons we should and as we should (ὅτε δεῖ καὶ ἐφ’ οἷς καὶ πρὸς οὓς καὶ οὗ ἕνεκα καὶ ὡς δεῖ) is the mean and the best, which is characteristic of virtue” (EN 1106b21–2). Negative expressions with δεῖ to indicate what we should not do are also found. Thus Aristotle says that the temperate man does not take pleasure “in things which he should not” (οἷς μὴ δεῖ) and when those things are absent he does not feel pain or only to a moderate degree and “not more than he should nor when he should not” (μᾶλλον ἢ δεῖ οὐδ’ ὅτε μὴ δεῖ – EN 1119a13–15). In light of such passages scholars have concluded that the use of similar language in the *Precepts* cannot reflect Pythagorean usage and must instead be due to Aristoxenus who is either unconsciously influenced by his teacher Aristotle’s usage, or is purposely borrowing Aristotelian terminology for the glory of the Pythagoreans (Täger 1922: 63). The situation is not so simple, however.

First, the exact expression used here in the *Precepts* (ὅτε οὐ δεῖ καὶ πρὸς ἃ οὐ δεῖ) finds no parallel in Aristotle. Expressions involving ὅτε δεῖ are not frequent in Aristotle but not rare either. The negative forms, ὅτε οὐ δεῖ and ὅτε μὴ δεῖ, appear five times and the positive form, ὅτε δεῖ, six times. On the other hand πρὸς ἃ οὐ δεῖ never appears in Aristotle and πρὸς ἃ δεῖ only twice (EE 1215a9; Pr. 951a22). Thus, it is not the case that in using ὅτε οὐ δεῖ καὶ πρὸς ἃ οὐ δεῖ, the *Precepts* are reproducing a particularly common Aristotelian expression either in terms of the whole expression or in terms of its parts. Even more importantly, Aristotle is not the only person to use such language; ὅτε δεῖ appears in the Platonic corpus on two occasions (*Euthd.* 287d1; *Epin.* 989c6). Most significantly of all, Demosthenes contrasts πρὸς ἃ μὴ δεῖ with πρὸς ἃ δεῖ in discussing someone who has spent his money “on things he should not” and thus does not have money for “the things which he should” (3.19.6), so that it is clear that such expressions were not the exclusive preserve of Aristotle, or even of philosophers, but were

available in public discourse. Finally, that the Pythagoreans should have developed such an expression is perfectly in accord with and indeed almost to be expected from the style and nature of the *Precepts* themselves. One of the characteristics of their style is precisely the repeated assertion of what they thought or supposed that people must or should do. Over and over again the infinitive δεῖν is used to introduce a precept (e.g., fr. 8, line 16; fr. 2, lines 1 and 12), so that it is not at all surprising that they should have developed an expression such as ὅτε οὐ δεῖ καὶ πρὸς ἅ οὐ δεῖ here in fragment 3.

15 | Fragment 4: The Generation of Children (39 W)

Stobaeus, *Eclogae* 4.37.4 [περί υγείας καὶ τῆς περὶ τὴν διαμονὴν αὐτῆς προνοίας]; cf. Iamblichus, VP 209 ff. and Ocellus 4.9–14 (= 52–7 Harder).

Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων.

περὶ δὲ γενέσεως παίδων τάδε ἔλεγον. καθόλου μὲν ᾠοντο δεῖν 1
φυλάττεσθαι τὸ καλούμενον προφερές, οὔτε γὰρ τῶν φυτῶν 2
οὔτε τῶν ζώων εὐκαρπα τὰ προφερῆ γίνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ χρόνον 3
τινὰ προπαρασκευάζεσθαι τῆς καρποφορίας, ἐν ᾧ ἐξισχύσαντα 4
καὶ τετελειωμένα τὰ σώματα παρέχειν τὰ τε σπέρματα καὶ τοὺς 5
καρπούς δεδύνηται. πολλὰ δὲ εἶναι ἐν τῷ «βίῳ», ἐν οἷς ἡ 6
ὀψιμαθία ἐστὶ βελτίων, οἷον καὶ τὸ τοῦ ἀφροδισιάζειν πρᾶγμα. 7
δεῖν οὖν ἔτι παῖδας οὕτως ἄγεσθαι διὰ τῶν ἀσκημάτων 8
ἀσχόλους, ὥστε μὴ μόνον μὴ ζητεῖν, ἀλλ' εἰ δυνατόν μηδὲ 9
εἰδέναι τὴν τοιαύτην συνουσίαν ἐντὸς τῶν εἴκοσι ἔτων. ὅταν 10
δὲ καὶ εἰς τοῦτο ἀφίκηται, σπανίοις εἶναι χρηστέον τοῖς 11
ἀφροδισίοις. τοῦτο γὰρ πρὸς τε τὴν τῶν γεννώντων καὶ 12
γεννησομένων εὐεξίαν πολὺ τι συμβάλλεσθαι. ἔλεγον δὲ μήτε 13
τροφῆς μήτε μέθης πλήρη ταῖς γυναιξίν εἰς τὸ γεννᾶν ὀμιλεῖν, οὐ 14
γὰρ ᾠοντο ἐκ φαύλης καὶ ἀσυμφώνου καὶ ταραχώδους κράσεως 15
εὐρυθμα καὶ καλὰ, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἀγαθὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν γίνεσθαι. 16

ecl. cum lemm. om. MA ἐκ τῶν ἀριστοξ^ε πυ^Θ S ἐκ τῶν
ἀριστοξένους Πυθαγορίου Tr. Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου
Πυθαγορείου Hense Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν
ἀποφάσεων scripsi 1 γενέσεως] codd. et Oc. γεννήσεως Iambl.
ἔλεγον] scripsi, cf. τάδε λέγειν αὐτοὺς ἔφασαν Iambl. VP 209 ἔλεγε
codd. ᾠοντο δεῖν] cf. ᾠοντο δεῖν Iambl. VP 209 6 «βίῳ»]
Koenius 8 δεῖν οὖν ἔτι] Wehrli δέον οὖν ἐστὶ codd. παῖδας] τὸν
παῖδα Oc. Iambl. ἀσκημάτων] S ἀσωμάτων Tr. 10 εἰδέναι]
Koenius εἶναι S εἴκοσι] Hense κ S εἴκοσιν Tr. 13 γεννησομένων]
Gaisford γεννησομένην S τι] S om. Tr. ἔλεγον] lscripsi, cf. 1 supra

ἔλεγε codd. 14 τροφῆς] S τρυφῆς Tr. 15 ῥοντο] scripsi, cf. ῥοντο
 γὰρ ἐκ φαύλης Iambl. VP 211 οἱ ταῖς S οἶται Diels 16 γίγνεσθαι]
 Wytttenbach γίγνεται S γίνεται Tr.

Translation

From the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus

Concerning generation of children they said the following. As a general rule, <they thought that it was necessary> to guard against what is called “precocious,” for neither in the case of plants nor of animals does the precocious bear good fruit, but they need to be prepared in advance of bearing fruit for some time, in which time their bodies, having gained full strength and having reached maturity, become able to provide both seeds and fruits. There are many things <in life> in which late-learning is better, as is the case also with the business of engaging in sex. It is necessary, then, that they be brought up so busy with training while still children, that not only do they not seek, but, if possible, that they not even know of such intercourse until they are twenty. Whenever the children have reached even this age, they must rarely engage in sex. For this contributes considerably to the good condition both of those who are begetting and of those who are going to be begotten. They said that one should not associate with women for reproduction when full of food and strong drink. For they did not think that from a temperament that is base and discordant and disordered well-proportioned and beautiful things arise, but things that are not at all good.

The Generation of Children

The first principle that the Pythagoreans posited concerning the production of children is that what is precocious should be avoided. This principle is based on the thesis that both in the case of animals and in the case of plants what is precocious does not bear good fruit. This thesis is supported by the argument that, before bearing fruit, bodies need to make preparations. The bodies of the parents need to have gained full strength and to have come to full development before providing seed and fruit. There seems to be an appeal to what is sometimes called the synonymy principle of causation. If a creature is to produce strong and fully developed offspring, that creature must be strong and fully developed itself.

The second principle, that people should not learn about sex until later in life, depends on the first. If bodies that are not fully developed should not produce offspring, it follows that the young should not engage in sex. One way to bring this about is to keep them ignorant of it. Thus, while children should certainly not seek to engage in sex before they are twenty, it is best that they not even know about it until then. One way to prevent them from seeking or even learning about sex is to keep them so busy with training that they do not have the time. The clear assumption here is that, if left to their own devices, children will find out about sex and will seek to engage in it, so that they have to be distracted by constant training.

The third principle is that, even when they reach the age of twenty, they should only rarely engage in sex. This principle is defended by the assertion that infrequent sex contributes to the health both of the parents and of the prospective child. No explicit justification is given for this assertion. A possible argument would be that frequent sexual activity weakens the body and also means that the seed produced from the weaker body will be less effective and produce weaker offspring. In order to appreciate how contrary to typical Greek practice the Pythagorean ideal regarding sex was, it is worth noting Riddle's comment in his study of contraception and abortion that "in antiquity, the evidence suggests, sexual restraint was largely ignored; pagan religion normally did not attempt to regulate sexual activity" (1992: 3). Sexual restraint was a central feature of Pythagorean ethics.

The fourth and final principle is that the manner in which intercourse is carried out influences the nature of the offspring so that if we want beautiful and well-proportioned offspring, intercourse should also be orderly and harmonious. This means that we should not try to generate offspring when we are in the disordered states associated with drunkenness or even with overeating. Gaca suggests that the problem with eating and drinking too much is that it "over-stimulates the sexual appetite and leads it to transgress the limit of temperate and deliberate reproduction" (2003: 105). However, the clause which explains the prohibition of sex when full of food or drink (οὐ γάρ . . . , lines 14–16), says nothing about the sexual appetite, let alone about over-stimulating it. Instead the point is made that from a temperament (κρᾶσις – see the commentary on line 15) that is base and discordant and disordered well-proportioned and beautiful things do not arise. The discordant

and disordered temperament is the temperament of the parent who has eaten or drunk too much and which is thus disordered. The seed and hence the offspring that arise from such a temperament will not be well-proportioned and beautiful. Once again the synonymy principle of causation is at work. The nature of the parent at the time of conception will be reflected in the nature of the offspring. (For the relation between the *Pythagorean Precepts* on the generation of children and Plato's and Aristotle's accounts of the generation of children see the commentary on fr. 9, section 6.)

Detailed Commentary

Lemma – Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων: The readings of the manuscripts as reported in the apparatus make clear that the lemma to this excerpt became garbled in transmission. Manuscript S shows that the lemma had been transmitted in abbreviated form at some point and such abbreviations can lead to confusion and mistaken interpretations of the abbreviations. Thus, Victor Trincavellus (Tr.) in his sixteenth century edition (Wachsmuth and Hense 1884–1912: xxiii) evidently expanded the abbreviation seen in S but mistakenly put Aristoxenus' name in the accusative rather than the genitive case. It may be that manuscripts M and A omitted the whole lemma because what the copyists found in their exemplars was corrupt. Hense follows the principle of emending the text preserved in S and Tr. in the least possible way so as to give an intelligible text: Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορείου (From the writings of Aristoxenus the Pythagorean). However, there are two problems with this. First, Aristoxenus is not described as a Pythagorean in the tradition, so it is very strange to label him one here. Second, the six other fragments from the *Precepts* that are preserved in Stobaeus all have identical lemmata: Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων. The abbreviated form as reported by S would be a natural abbreviation for this and all that would have needed to have happened was that the abbreviation for the last word (ἀποφάσεων) mistakenly fell out of the text. Surely it is much more reasonable to emend the lemma here in fragment 4 to match the other six lemmata, given the ease of explaining the error, than to follow Hense and to give a lemma that is unparalleled and idiosyncratically describes Aristoxenus as a Pythagorean.

Line 1 – περὶ δέ: Aristoxenus frequently uses this phrase plus the genitive to introduce a new section of the *Precepts*. See the discussion of the style of the *Precepts* in the Introduction.

Line 1 – γενέσεως παίδων: The versions of this text in Iamblichus (VP 209) and ps.-Ocellus (52, p. 23.21 Harder) both omit παίδων. The manuscripts, although not Harder's text, of ps.-Ocellus agree with Stobaeus in reading γενέσεως, while Iamblichus reads γεννήσεως. There is no good reason to exclude παίδων from Stobaeus' text. Indeed, given that Iamblichus or his source commonly makes changes involving the insertion and removal of words, it is more likely that he dropped the word than that Stobaeus or his source added it, but certainty is not possible. It is also impossible to be certain whether Aristoxenus wrote γενέσεως or γεννήσεως. The first is generally more common and appears already in Homer and Empedocles. The latter, however, appears in fragment 13 of Philolaus and is fairly common in Plato and Aristotle. While γένεσις comes from γενέσθαι ("to come to be") and originally means "coming into being" quite generally, γέννησις comes from γεννάω ("to beget" or "to bring forth") and thus originally refers more specifically to the begetting of a child. However, Plato's usage suggests that the two words came to be used essentially interchangeably. Thus, at *Laws* 783b he says "after marriage let us place the generation (γένεσιν) of children," while at *Laws* 631d7 he refers to the generation (γεννήσεις) and rearing of children. In both of these cases Plato also includes the genitive παίδων, which we find here in Stobaeus. Thus it seems quite possible that here Aristoxenus used the more general γενέσεως with παίδων to define it, while in the continuation of the passage preserved in Iamblichus (fr. 9, line 146) he uses γεννήσεις as a synonym for the combination of γενέσεως with παίδων. Iamblichus then regularized the passage by using γεννήσεις in both places.

Both γένεσις and γέννησις refer to the whole process of coming into being of the child from the sex act to birth. This can be easily seen by looking at Aristotle's treatise *Generation of Animals* (Περὶ ζῴων γενέσεως), where the γένεσις of the title clearly refers to the whole range of discussion that follows from the sex act, through the development of the embryo to birth and the characteristics of the offspring. At 777a28 ἐπὶ κεφαλὴν . . . γένεσις must refer to births that are head-first, while in other passages, such as the discussion of the way in which birds copulate, γένεσις clearly mainly refers to the sex act (756b13). Scholars have accordingly translated the terms as "reproductive sex acts" in some contexts and as "births" in others. Gaca argued that, since the parallel passage to fragment 4 in Iamblichus (VP 209–11) pertains to "methods of sexual intercourse," the word should be translated as "reproductive sex acts" here in fragment 4 (2003: 100). However, we do not have the whole of the Pythagorean discussion of this topic, and in the further discussion of it found in fragment 9, there is at least one context in which "reproductive sex acts" does not seem to be the best translation (see the commentary on fr. 9, lines 145–7). Moreover, even in fragment 4, if we follow the manuscripts of Stobaeus and include the genitive παίδων, it is less natural to understand the genitive as some sort of genitive of the goal

(“reproductive sex acts leading to children”) than as a simple possessive genitive (“the generation of children”). It is thus better to translate the term in a way that maintains the general meaning of the term, which is likely to have been the way in which the Greek reader would have heard it. Accordingly, I have used the translation “generation of children,” which in English has the same broad reference to the whole process of the production of a child as the Greek word does.

Line 1 – ἔλεγον: All of the manuscripts of Stobaeus read the third-person singular form ἔλεγε here. Nonetheless, it seems very likely that what Aristoxenus wrote was ἔλεγον. See the discussion of this issue in [Chapter 3](#) of the Introduction. Similarly plurals should be read in lines 13 and 15 below (ἔλεγον, ᾤοντο).

Line 1 – <ᾤοντο δεῖν>: Both Hense in his edition of Stobaeus and Wehrli in his edition of Aristoxenus print the text as it is found in the manuscripts with nothing to govern φυλάττεσθαι. This simply will not work because the Pythagoreans are then made to say not that one *should* guard against the precocious but that people do in fact guard against it. This latter assertion is of doubtful veracity, since many people would not seem to observe such a stricture. More importantly, the general style of the *Precepts* is to present what should be done rather than what is done. Hense in his apparatus in fact suggests that <δεῖν> should perhaps be read. In the parallel passage in Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (209 = fr. 9, line 125), the phrase ᾤοντο δεῖν governs φυλάττεσθαι, and it seems almost certain that this is what Aristoxenus wrote and what should be printed here. Simply reading δεῖν has the advantage of being the minimum change to the text of fragment 4 that will restore sense, but not only is ᾤοντο δεῖν what is found in Iamblichus but the same phrase is also used elsewhere in the *Precepts* (fr. 2, line 1 and fr. 8, line 16).

Line 2 – προφερές: The concept of the προφερές as “precocious” is the central idea in the fragment. It clearly has a negative sense for the Pythagoreans just as “precocious” has come to have a mildly negative sense in English (OED). This negative meaning for the word appears to be unique to the *Pythagorean Precepts*. The word is most common in the comparative and superlative and is much more common in poetry than prose. It appears in Homer only in the comparative and superlative and always has a positive sense meaning “excelling,” “superior,” or “best.” It is usually applied to people or gods. Thus Odysseus admits that Philoctetes was better with the bow than he was but claims that he was “the best by far” (πολύ προφερέστερον) of the rest of the Greeks (*Od.* 8.221). As well as appearing in Homer and Hesiod it is found in tragedy and Hellenistic poetry. The simple form of the adjective is rare and appears in only three passages, besides this section of the *Pythagorean Precepts*, before the end of the fourth

century. In all three of the other passages it has a positive sense. In the Hesiodic *Shield*, Atropos is described as “superior” to the other Fates and older (260, προφερέης . . . πρεσβυτάτη). In Plato’s *Euthydemus* (271b), a young man is described as προφερέης in the sense of being well-developed for his age in contrast to another boy who is described as σκληφρός (“slight” or “scrawny”). There could be a hint of precocity in this description, but the overall sense is clearly positive. The young man is “well-developed” or has “come on finely” (tr. Lamb in the Loeb). Aeschines says that some people, while being young, appear προφερεῖς and older. Here the adjective is best translated as “mature” or “well-developed.” Almost all of the later occurrences of the simple form of the adjective are in lexicographical or scholia commenting on these two passages in Plato and Aeschines.

A further indication that the Pythagoreans were in effect coining a term by using προφερέης in a negative sense is indicated by Aristoxenus’ use of the qualifying phrase τὸ καλούμενον. Aristoxenus uses the expression “what they call precocious” to indicate that the Pythagoreans are using the term in an unusual sense that is of their coinage.

Lines 2–3 – οὔτε γὰρ τῶν φυτῶν οὔτε τῶν ζώων: The pairing of φυτὸν and ζῷον is common in both Plato and Aristotle and can also be found in Archytas A23a.

Line 3 – εὐκαρπια: The adjective εὐκαρπτος appears several times in Pindar and in Greek tragedy, where it often refers to land as “fruitful.” It appears only once in Plato and never in Aristotle. Not surprisingly Theophrastus uses it on several occasions in his botanical works, including a reference to trees that are “fruitful” or “bear well” (CP 2.1.2.10).

Lines 3–4 – χρόνον τινὰ προπαρασκευάζεσθαι τῆς καρποφορίας: The infinitive is passive and governed by δεῖν, which is carried over from line 1. The subject of the infinitive is understood to be “plants and animals” from line 2. Thus, the sentence is to be construed “but they [plants and animals] need to be prepared in advance of bearing fruit for some time.”

Line 4 – καρποφορίας: There are only two appearances of this word before the end of the fourth century BC, here and in a roughly contemporary passage of Theophrastus (CP 1.18.5.5). The passage in Ocellus cited by LSJ as the oldest appearance is a later forgery based on the *Pythagorean Precepts*. The word becomes much more common later in Philo, Irenaeus and Origen.

Line 4 – ἐξιχύσαντα: The root verb ἰσχύω (“be strong”) is fairly common in the fifth and fourth centuries, but this is the only appearance of this compound before the end of the fourth century. It appears a couple of times in Strabo and becomes more common in authors of the second and third centuries AD. It never appears in Iamblichus so it is not likely to have

been inserted by him. The prefix in the compound sometimes seems to indicate capability (“be strong enough” LSJ) but here in Aristoxenus may have its typical use to express completion. It is not at all surprising that the Pythagoreans would introduce a new compound of a familiar verb, since that compound fits the context well. The aorist then indicates the act of attaining full strength.

Line 5 – τετελειωμένα: The verb τελειόω is commonly used in the passive of people (Plato, *Symp.* 192a and *Resp.* 466e) or plants (Thphr. *HP* 8.2.6) that have been made perfect, i.e. that have reached maturity.

Lines 5–6 – τὰ τε σπέρματα καὶ τοὺς καρπούς: These two words commonly appear together in Aristotle and Theophrastus. The fruit is what contains the seed and Theophrastus, in *The Enquiry into Plants* (1.2.1.12), accordingly defines the fruit (καρπός) as “the sum total of the seed with the seed-vessel” (τὸ συγκεείμενον σπέρμα μετὰ τοῦ περικαρπίου). Aristotle says that “the function of most animals is pretty much the same as of plants: seed and fruit” (σπέρμα καὶ καρπός – *GA* 717a22). Both animals and plants produce seed, which grows into a mature individual that bears fruit (offspring), which produces more seed. It appears that Philolaus thought that in animal reproduction only the male contributed seed (Huffman 1993: 298; for Philolaus’ views on seed see A27 and B13). The Pythagoreans of the *Pythagorean Precepts*, who may have been his pupils, may have thought of seed here in the *Precepts*, in the case of animals at least, as produced only by the male. The female, however, must have been seen as bearing the fruit (the offspring). The Pythagorean idea here in fragment 4 is thus that the human being needs to be mature in order to produce [good] seed and bear [good] offspring.

Line 7 – ὀψιμαθία: The noun is rare, appearing less than ten times in all of Greek literature. The adjective is more common. The earliest uses of the noun are this usage in the *Precepts* and in the roughly contemporary *Characters* of Theophrastus (27.1). The adjective appears first in the fourth century. Plato uses it twice as do Isocrates and Xenophon.

There are two main meanings. First, both this noun and its related adjective most commonly have a negative meaning, which is clear in Theophrastus’ description of the character called opsimathy, “late-learning” (*Characters* 27). The exact connotation is a little elusive and untranslatable into English. As Theophrastus says, it refers to activity that is beyond or inappropriate to one’s age (ὕπερ τὴν ἡλικίαν). It describes someone who has learned something late in life that is more appropriate to younger people and who tries to compete with younger people in these matters such as competing in the torch race for boys (27.5). It is also the case that the late learner becomes excessively attached to

what he has learned at this late age and thus tends to be pedantic about it and officious. These negative aspects can be seen in an anecdote about Philip of Macedon told by Plutarch (*On the Fortune of Alexander* 334c–d; cf. *Table Talk* 634c–d). Philip argued with a harp player about technique and the man cleverly responded by saying “God forbid that you should ever fall so low as to know more of these matters than I.” So the point is that Philip was not supposed to be concerned with such matters at his age (harp-playing being part of the standard education of the young) and rank, but he also displays the late-learner’s conviction that he knows the truth on the subject which he has learned, so that he quarrels with the harp-player about technique.

Second, and less commonly, the term can describe someone who literally learns something late in life. Thus Plutarch describes Cato the Elder as not learning Greek until late in life (*Cato the Elder* 2.5.1). Even with this more simply descriptive meaning there can be the negative implication that the person learned something late because they were a slow learner. Thus, Isocrates in the *Helen* (10.2) asks “who is so late of learning that he does not know . . .” This simple sense of slow or late learning can then be given a positive twist, when what is to be learned is something bad. Thus at *Resp.* 409b, Socrates recommends that a judge should be someone who has learned about injustice only late in life; Isocrates praises his Athenian ancestors as late learners of evil (12.96) and in Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* (1.6.35), Cyrus describes himself as a late learner in the art of taking advantage of others. It is clearly this positive usage that is found here in the *Precepts*, when it is asserted that many things and in particular sex are better learned late. The more common negative meaning of “late learning” is not relevant to this passage of the *Precepts* except insofar as there is some sense of reaction against and an attempt to correct the common negative use. It is implied that many people think of late learning in the second negative sense but that they should recognize that in many cases, such as sexual matters, it is better literally to learn about them relatively late in life.

Line 7 – τὸ τοῦ ἀφροδισιάζειν πρᾶγμα: There is no exact parallel for this phrase. The verb ἀφροδισιάζω first appears in the late fifth and fourth centuries. It appears four times in Xenophon, once in Plato, seven times in the Hippocratic corpus and over fifty times in the Aristotelian corpus. A large percentage of these usages appear in the section of the Aristotelian *Problems* that deal with problems concerning sexual intercourse (876a30–880b14). Nothing in the section on sex in the *Problems* shows any particular connection with what is said about sex here in the *Precepts*.

Line 8 – δεῖν οὖν ἔτι: This is Wehrli’s emendation for the manuscripts’ δεῖον οὖν ἔστι. There are no real parallels for either exact phrase. However, δεῖον appears nowhere else in Aristoxenus, whereas δεῖν is common in the *Precepts*. ἔτι is not

necessary for the sense but it makes good sense in the context and of course ἐστι will not work grammatically if δεῖν is read.

Line 8 – ἄγεισθαι: For the meanings “bring up, train, educate” see LSJ II.5. It is used this way already in Plato (*Lg.* 782d).

Lines 8–9 – διὰ τῶν ἀσκημάτων ἀσχόλους: The adjective ἀσχολος meaning “without leisure” or “busy” is found already in the fifth century in Pindar, Euripides and Herodotus and is found in both Plato and Aristotle in the fourth century. It is found with διὰ to give the explanation for the lack of leisure in pseudo-Demosthenes (10.47.6), which is probably roughly contemporary with the *Precepts*, as well as later in Plutarch (*Greek Questions* 296c4). There is no parallel for the combination of ἀσχολος and ἀσκημα. Before the time of the *Precepts*, the noun ἀσκημα, meaning “exercise,” “practice,” or “training” appears three times in Xenophon and once in the Hippocratic corpus, although it never appears in Plato or Aristotle and only appears some forty times in all of ancient Greek literature.

The sixteenth-century edition of Stobaeus by Victor Trincavellus which faithfully represents the lost codex Marcianus 4.19 reads ἀσωμάτων rather than ἀσκημάτων. The sense would then be that children must be so busy with “immaterial things” (rather than “training”) that they not even know about sex until they are twenty. Other evidence suggests that Plato was the first to use ἀσώματος (Renahan 1980), so it is unlikely to have been used by the Pythagoreans who promulgated the *Precepts*, since those Pythagoreans elsewhere use the general concepts of fourth-century thought but do not use technical Platonic or Aristotelian terminology. Moreover, there is no trace elsewhere in the *Precepts* of a distinction between the material and immaterial. It is much more likely that a later copyist or commentator who was very familiar with the contrast between the material and the immaterial consciously or unconsciously introduced ἀσωμάτων here.

Line 10 – συνουσίαν: Although sexual intercourse is one meaning for this word, this is a specialized usage of a broader concept of “being with” or “being together” which more generally refers to being together for feasting or conversation. It can also refer to the specialized “being together” of a student and teacher. Here the word in itself simply indicates social intercourse in general, but the adjective τοιούτην makes clear that it is a certain sort of intercourse that is meant, i.e. sexual intercourse.

Line 10 – ἐν τὸς τῶν εἴκοσι ἔτῶν: The twenty-year ban on the practice and even the knowledge of sex is in accord with the Pythagorean division of life into four twenty-year periods, the first of which is the age of the child. For more discussion of the Pythagorean age groups see the commentary on fragment 2. The Pythagoreans

appear to make no distinction between males and females regarding these age groups, which is a significant difference from Plato and Aristotle. In the *Republic* Plato suggests that sex for a woman should begin at twenty but for men at twenty-five (460e1). In the *Laws* the man is not supposed to marry before twenty-five (772d) or thirty (721a and 785b) and not later than thirty-five, a woman not earlier than sixteen nor later than twenty (785b). The begetting of children is only supposed to last for ten years (784b). Aristotle suggests that a man should marry at thirty-seven and a woman at eighteen and that they should beget children for seventeen years (*Pol.* 1335a28–9 and 1335b26 ff.). Thus both Plato's and also Aristotle's account of when sexual activity should begin are quite different from what is said here in the *Precepts*.

Line 11 – ἀφίκηται: Just above in line 8 the plural παῖδας was used and it is likely that the Pythagoreans are thinking of both boys and girls (see fr. 9, line 130). Thus, it is misleading here to translate “whenever he has reached this age,” using the masculine singular pronoun, so I have used the plural so as to keep the sex of the child neutral. I have done the same thing in the parallel passages in fragment 9.

Lines 11–12 – σπανίοις εἶναι χρηστέον τοῖς ἀφροδισίοις: Plato uses somewhat similar language, when he argues in the *Laws* that, if people engaged in sex rarely because of shame (σπανίῳ . . . τῷ τοιοῦτῳ δι' αἰσχύνην χρώμενοι), they would find sex a weaker master (841a). Recommendations to engage in sex infrequently can also be found outside the fourth century and are likely to be found in most time periods. See for example the physician Aetius of Amida in the sixth century AD, who says “let the use of sex be most rare” (ἀφροδισίων δὲ σπανιωτάτη ἢ χρῆσις ἔστω – 6.23.89).

Line 12 – πρὸς τε τήν: For the position of τε see, for example, Sophocles, *Ajax* 654–5 εἶμι πρὸς τε λουτρὰ καὶ . . . λειμῶνας.

Lines 12–13 – τῶν γεννώντων καὶ γεννησομένων: The active participle is used in both Plato and Aristotle to describe parents as begetting children (Pl. *Lg.* 776b2; Arist. *GA* 721b7). The future middle is, however, fairly rare and this is its earliest appearance. The next earliest appearance is in Diodorus Siculus in the first century BC. Here in the *Precepts* the middle appears to be used passively, since there is little sense in making the point that engaging in sex rarely will contribute to the good condition of both those begetting now and those begetting in the future. The present participle could indicate this alone, since it can be interpreted to cover all cases (“those begetting” at whatever time). If the future is taken passively, then it makes the important point that engaging infrequently in sex will help the condition both of those begetting children and the condition of the children that are going to be born. Such

a passive use is found in Diod. Sic. 19.2, although some scholars have emended it to a passive form. The future middle is also used in a passive sense by Philo (*On the Creation* 133.3).

Line 13 – εὐεξίαν: This noun first appears in the fifth century in Euripides and is common in the fourth century and later. It is found several times in Xenophon and Plato and numerous times in Aristotle. It is common in medical writings appearing both in the Hippocratic corpus and Galen. Although it is frequently paired with a word meaning health (e.g., Arist. *Top.* 105a31), it refers not to health proper but rather to good physical condition, especially the good condition that results from athletic training. Isocrates criticizes those who prefer gymnastic training to philosophy and says that everyone knows that it was not through the good physical condition of the body (διὰ μὲν εὐεξίαν σώματος) that Athens accomplished anything noteworthy but rather through the intelligence of its men (15.250). Here it is clearly the strength and physical prowess that is at question and not mere health. The same usage is found in the Hippocratic corpus (*Aph.* 1.3), “the height of good conditioning in athletes is treacherous if it is at the extreme” (ἐν τοῖσι γυμναστικοῖσιν αἱ ἐπ’ ἄκρον εὐεξίαι σφαλεραί, ἦν ἐν τῷ ἐσχάτῳ ἔωσιν). So the central point here in the *Pythagorean Precepts* is not that infrequent sex will help parents to be in good basic health, although it might do that too, but rather that it will contribute to their being in good physical condition and help them to produce babies that are more physically vigorous. The Pythagoreans are clearly working on the assumption that frequent sex saps physical energy and makes the body flabby.

Line 13 – πολύ τι: This adverb appears in Aristophanes (*Pax* 823) and in a number of fourth-century authors, including Xenophon, Plato and Aristotle. It appears several times in Plato with the verb διαφέρω to indicate that something does or does not differ “much” from something else (*Resp.* 484d).

Line 13 – συμβάλλεσθαι: This verb commonly means “contribute” in the middle and is often used with the preposition πρὸς (e.g., Xen. *Cyr.* 2.4.21; Isoc. 7.21) as it is here.

Line 13 – ἔλεγον: For the emendation to the plural verb form see the note on line 1 above.

Lines 13–14 – μήτε τροφῆς μήτε μέθης: Both of these words are common in Greek of the fifth and fourth centuries but it is interesting to note, in light of the common English expression “food and drink,” that this is the only place where they are presented as a pair until the second century AD. Part of the explanation for this is undoubtedly that μέθη refers specifically to strong drink rather than just drink in general. The idea that parents should not engage in sex when drunk

and should watch what foods they eat was widespread. See [Chapter 9](#) of the Introduction.

Line 14 – ταῖς γυναῖξιν εἰς τὸ γεννᾶν ὁμιλεῖν: The phrase γυναῖξιν . . . ὁμιλεῖν is first found in Xenophon (*An.* 3.2.25.4). The expression suggests sexual intercourse, but the addition of εἰς τὸ γεννᾶν makes clear that the intention of the intercourse is production of children. The phrase εἰς τὸ γεννᾶν is also found in one passage of Plato (*Resp.* 424b1).

Line 15 – ῥοντο: For the emendation to the plural verb form see the note on line 1 above.

Line 15 – φαύλης καὶ ἀσυμφώνου καὶ ταραχώδους κράσεως: There is no parallel for the use of these three adjectives together. The adjective ἀσύμφωνος, “discordant,” appears first in Plato (five times) and then in Aristotle (once) and Theophrastus (three times) as well as once elsewhere in Aristoxenus (*Harm.* 37.13). The adjective ταραχώδης, “troubled” or “disordered,” appears once each in Herodotus and Thucydides and is very common in the Hippocratic corpus as well as in fourth-century authors. Both of these adjectives are only found with κρᾶσις in this passage.

There is some ambiguity as to what is meant by κρᾶσις here. In the preceding sentence the advice was that one should not associate with women for reproduction when full of food and drink. Thus, it might seem natural to assume that κρᾶσις has its basic meaning of “mixing” here and refers to the mixing of male and female in intercourse. On the other hand, κρᾶσις can refer to the temperament of the body or mind, where the temperament is understood as the mixing of the parts of the body or mind (LSJ s.v. iii). So are the *Precepts* here concerned with the quality of the mixing of the male and female in intercourse, which could be influenced by, e.g., a state of drunkenness, or with the mixture of body that the male brings to intercourse, which influences the nature of his seed? It is clear that Iamblichus or his source interpreted the passage in the latter way, since his text explicitly refers to unsound “seeds” (σπέρματα) arising from bad mixings, where the mixing in question must be the temperament of the body of the person producing the seed, because it is that mixture that is relevant to the nature of the seed, while the mixture of male and female is not. Although the context in fragment 4 might seem to favor the idea that the mixing is the mixing of male and female, there does not seem to be a parallel for the use of κρᾶσις to refer to the coupling of male and female in intercourse, while it is repeatedly used of the mixture of elements that make up the body (LSJ s.v.). Thus, Iamblichus’ reading of the passage as referring to the constitution of the body, whose nature determines the nature of the seed, seems correct.

Lines 15–16 – ἀσυμφώνου . . . εὐρυθμα: Both of these terms have strong musical overtones and are thus particularly appropriate in the Pythagorean tradition in which the cosmos as a whole is conceived of as having a musical order (e.g., Philolaus, fr. 6a). Well-shaped, literally “rhythmical,” things do not arise from intercourse that is not harmonious or is discordant.

Line 16 – εὐρυθμα καὶ καλά: The adjective εὐρυθμος is first used in Greek drama where it applies to the rhythmic step of members of the chorus (Aristoph. *Th.* 985, *Pl.* 759). A passage in Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* (3.10.9–15) provides the best parallel for this usage in the *Precepts*, where the adjective seems to describe the bodies of the offspring as “well-proportioned.” In that passage Socrates is talking to an armorer named Pistias, who says that his breastplates cost more than others because they are “better-proportioned” (εὐρυθμοτέρους). Socrates and Pistias agree that some human bodies are well-proportioned and others ill-proportioned (σώματά γε ἀνθρώπων τὰ μὲν εὐρυθμά ἐστι, τὰ δὲ ἄρρυθμα). Socrates then asks how a breastplate that has to fit (ἀρμόττοντα) an ill-proportioned body can be well-proportioned. Pistias says that the breastplate will be well-proportioned if it fits the body. Thus, it is recognized that breastplates can be either well-proportioned absolutely or in relation to the wearer, i.e. in so far as they fit the wearer. There are a number of passages in which εὐρυθμος and καλός are associated in some way as they are here in the *Precepts*. Thus, in the *Republic* (400d1) we are told that “good rhythm” (τὸ εὐρυθμον) accompanies fine diction (τῇ καλῇ λέξει). In the Hippocratic corpus (*Off.* 4.10) the advice is to carry out certain procedures gracefully (καλῶς) and elegantly (εὐρύθμως).

Line 16, οὐδὲ . . . τὴν ἀρχήν: This combination commonly means “not at all”. See Powell, 1966 s.v. i. 3c.

16 | Fragment 5: The Love of What is Beautiful and Fine (40 W)

Stobaeus, *Eclogae* 3.1.101 [περὶ ἀρετῆς]

Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων·

τὴν ἀληθῆ φιλοκαλίαν ἐν τοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασι καὶ ἐν ταῖς 1
ἐπιστήμαις ἔλεγον εἶναι. τὸ γὰρ ἀγαπᾶν καὶ στέργειν τὰ καλὰ 2
τῶν ἐθῶν τε καὶ ἐπιτηδευμάτων ὑπάρχειν, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τῶν 3
ἐπιστημῶν τε καὶ ἐμπειριῶν τὰς καλὰς καὶ εὐσχήμονας, ἀληθῶς 4
εἶναι φιλοκάλους, τὴν δὲ λεγομένην ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν 5
φιλοκαλίαν, οἷον «ἐν» τοῖς ἀναγκαίοις καὶ χρησίμοις πρὸς τὸν 6
βίον γινομένην, λάφυρά που τῆς ἀληθινῆς κεῖσθαι φιλοκαλίας. 7

ecl. cum lemm. hab. A, om. M 2 ἔλεγον] scripsi ἔλεγεν codd.

2-3 τὰ καλὰ τῶν ἐθῶν] scripsi τῶν καλῶν ἐθῶν codd. 3 ὑπάρχειν]

Meineke ὑπάρχει A 5 φιλοκάλους] codd. φιλοκάλου Wachsmuth

6 «ἐν»] Hense «τὴν ἐν» Diels

Translation

From the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus:

They said that true love of what is beautiful and fine is found in our pursuits and in the sciences. For to prize and love customs and pursuits that are fine, just as also those kinds of sciences and practices which are fine and seemly, is truly to be lovers of what is beautiful and fine, but that which is called love of the beautiful and fine by the many, such as that which arises with regard to things that are necessary and useful for life, lies, presumably, as the spoils of the true love of what is beautiful and fine.

Overview of the Argument

The fragment argues that true love of what is beautiful and fine does not, as most people suppose, pertain to objects that are necessary or useful to living, i.e. material goods such as clothing, food and possessions of various sorts, but instead pertains to our pursuits and the theory and practice of various kinds of knowledge. The true lover of what is beautiful and fine prizes and loves customs and pursuits that are fine and those kinds of knowledge and practices that are fine and honorable. What is called love of the fine by the many is described as “the spoils of true love of what is fine.” Presumably this means that we attain the objects at which ordinary love of the fine is directed, if we pursue and attain the objects of true love of beauty. Thus, fine clothes and possessions will be ours as the spoils of engaging in virtuous practices and attaining noble sorts of knowledge. The true objects of our love are the appropriate pursuits and sorts of knowledge, but if we win the battle necessary to attain these objects we will gain, as by-products of this victory, beautiful and fine material objects, which bring us glory in the eyes of the many. On its surface this claim appears to be false. It is simply not the case that the most virtuous and knowledgeable of mortals typically also are rewarded with the most glorious material goods. Perhaps the point is slightly different. If we make virtuous practices and knowledge our goal, then it will be easy for us to attain all the worldly finery that we need, i.e. not very much. Those who focus on such finery have to spend a great amount of labor trying to attain it, but that is because they have a false assessment of what they really need. The point may be similar to that made by Socrates in the *Apology* where he claims that “wealth does not bring virtue but rather virtue brings wealth and every other good thing” (30b). Socrates emphasizes his poverty so that he is hardly claiming that we get rich in a conventional sense as the result of virtuous action. Instead he is claiming that it is virtue that makes money and everything else good for us (Burnet 1924: 124). If we lack virtue, however much money we have, we cannot use it to our good. Virtue also leads us to have as much money as we need and as is good for us, i.e. not very much. The Pythagoreans argue similarly, that we can make no use of items traditionally regarded as fine, unless we have attained virtue and knowledge, but once we attain the latter then we gain, as a by-product, as spoils, what little we need of traditional finery.

Relation of the Fragment to Plato and Aristotle

Wehrli argued that the conception of what is truly beautiful and fine in the fragment “stemmed from the Platonic and Aristotelian valuation of earthly possessions” (1967: 62), as part of his general view that Aristoxenus assigned Platonic and Aristotelian ideas to the Pythagoreans in order to glorify them at Plato’s and Aristotle’s expense. Zhmud has more recently developed a similar point (2012a: 65, n. 17). In [Chapter 9](#) of the Introduction I show that while there are similarities between the Pythagorean and the Platonic/Aristotelian conception, there is no reason to suppose that the concept of φιλοκαλία in the *Precepts* was derived from Plato and Aristotle. See also the detailed commentary below, which shows that the Pythagorean conception fits well with the late fifth- and early fourth-century conception of someone who is φιλόκαλος.

Detailed Commentary

Line 1 – φιλοκαλίαν: The earliest use of this noun elsewhere in ancient Greek literature is by Diodorus Siculus in the first century BC, so that this use in Aristoxenus is by far the earliest. Both the verb φιλοκαλέω and the adjective φιλόκαλος are found in the fifth and fourth centuries before Aristoxenus, however, so it is by no means impossible that he should have used the noun. Diodorus uses the noun to describe an Egyptian pharaoh as falling short of the high-mindedness (μεγαλοψυχία) and love of what is fine (φιλοκαλία) which was displayed by his predecessors (1.51.2). The noun is sometimes translated simply as “love of beauty” but its pairing with μεγαλοψυχία suggests not just a love of the beautiful but a love of the fine and noble, of beautiful things that bring glory to their possessor or creator. This union of the love of the beautiful with the love of what is noble and brings glory is also found in the earlier uses of the verb and adjective. Thus Isocrates twice describes the person who is φιλόκαλος as also μεγαλοπρεπής, “magnificent” (*Dem.* 10 and 27). Xenophon describes two different individuals as at the same time φιλόκαλος and φιλότιμος, “eager for glory” (*Cyr.* 1.3.3; 2.1.22). Thus, the soldier who is described as φιλόκαλον about his equipment, ὅπλα (*Cyr.* 2.1.22), is not just fond of beautiful arms but of fine arms that are well made and bring glory to their possessor. Isocrates makes a careful distinction between someone who is φιλόκαλος regarding dress, who pursues the beautiful and fine in a tasteful way and hence attains magnificence, and someone who is καλλωπιστής in that they pursue finery to excess (*Dem.* 27). For

Xenophon too, the φιλόκαλος is particularly concerned with fine clothes as is seen in his description of the young Cyrus (*Cyr.* 1.3.3). The most famous use of the verb φιλοκαλέω, in Pericles' funeral oration as presented by Thucydides (2.40), seems to presuppose the same distinction (see [Chapter 9](#) of the Introduction).

Turning to explicitly philosophical texts, we find that the adjective φιλόκαλος appears six times in Aristotle and twice in Plato. Aristotle (*EN* 1125b12) preserves the close connection between φιλόκαλος and φιλότιμος that appeared in Xenophon. He makes explicit what was implicit in Isocrates, i.e. that the person who is φιλόκαλος takes pleasure in things that are pleasurable by nature rather than in the things that are pleasurable to the many (*EN* 1099a13, cf. 1179b9). In light of this last usage, it is not surprising that Plato describes the highest life to which a soul can be reborn as the life of the φιλόσοφος and the φιλόκαλος (*Phdr.* 248d3). The philosopher is the person who loves what is truly fine, noble, and beautiful.

The Pythagorean use of φιλοκαλία makes sense in the context of the uses of φιλόκαλος that we have seen in the fifth and fourth centuries. When Aristoxenus refers to what is called love of what is fine and beautiful by the many, he is referring to the character of the people that Isocrates and Xenophon regarded as φιλόκαλος, those who show good taste with regard to weapons or clothing. This is the sort of φιλοκαλία that deals with things that are necessary or useful for life. The Pythagoreans suggest that even tasteful pursuit of such necessities is not true love of what is beautiful and fine. One who is truly φιλόκαλος loves what is truly fine, not fine clothes and weapons, but knowledge and virtuous action.

In the fourth century, Isocrates repeatedly praises virtue and the good reputation that follows from it over wealth and physical beauty (1.6, 19, 38; 2.30). He also makes the point that a good name (obtained through virtue) brings wealth, whereas a good name cannot be bought by wealth (2.32), a point which is closely parallel to the end of fragment 5, where the material goods praised by the many are said to be the spoils of true love of the fine and beautiful. The Pythagoreans take over the notion of φιλοκαλία from the Greek moral tradition as represented by Isocrates and transform it. Isocrates had argued that the φιλόκαλος pursued material goods in a moderate and tasteful fashion, but the Pythagoreans argue that true φιλοκαλία has nothing to do with material goods. Isocrates himself had recognized that moral virtue was more important than material goods and the Pythagoreans build on this point to argue that true φιλοκαλία has to do with these virtues and not with material goods at all. It is thus clear, as I have argued in [Chapter 9](#) of the Introduction, that the Pythagorean conception of φιλοκαλία was not borrowed from Plato or Aristotle.

It is worth noting that fourth-century gnomic literature and encomia frequently use compound words with the prefix φιλ- in order to indicate desirable

qualities. Thus Isocrates not only urges Demonicus to be φιλόκαλος (*Dem.* 27) but also says that, if he is a lover of knowledge (φιλομαθής) he will be learned (*Dem.* πολυμαθής – 1.18). Xenophon, in his account of the education of Cyrus, identifies his three cardinal qualities as love of humanity, love of knowledge and love of honor (φιλανθρωπία, φιλομάθεια, φιλοτιμία – *Cyr.* 1.2.1.) These three qualities lead to other praiseworthy loves, such as love of toil, love of danger, love of horses, love of hunting (*An.* 1.9 – see Sandridge 2012).

Line 1 – ἐπιτηδεύμασι: An ἐπιτήδευμα is any sort of activity to which we devote our time. It is therefore best translated as “pursuit.” It is sometimes translated “custom” or “observance” but these translations convey the idea of something traditional and sanctioned by society. When we are told that the Athenians took offense at Alcibiades’ ἐπιτηδεύματα (*Thuc.* 6.15), it is not customs or observances that are in question but his pursuits, such as his horseracing and partying. Sometimes the word indicates not a single pursuit but someone’s overall way of living (e.g., *Isoc.* 10.54). Of the examples listed in LSJ only *Thuc.* 1.138 at first sight suggests the translation “custom,” but in light of the usage elsewhere, it is quite possible that in this passage Thucydides is saying not that Themistocles learned the customs of the country but rather the pursuits of the people, which might include customs but would also include things that would not normally be labeled customs. That ἐπιτήδευμα is a more general term and that what is customary is a subspecies of it is suggested by the further explication of ἐπιτήδευμα by the expression “customs and practices” (ἔθων καὶ ἐπιτηδευμάτων) in line 3 of fragment 5. Ἐπιτηδεύματα is being used as the general term for pursuits, including both those that are sanctioned by society and those that are not, but since it does not carry the connotation of societal sanction with it, the term can also be used alongside “customs” to denote the species of pursuits that is not specifically sanctioned by society in contrast to customs which are specifically sanctioned. For a similar usage see Plato’s reference to practices and laws (τοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασι καὶ τοῖς νόμοις) at *Symposium* 210c.

Lines 2–4 – ἐπιστήμῃς . . . ἐπιστημῶν τε καὶ ἐμπειρίῳν: ἐπιστήμη is first used to indicate any organized body of knowledge and then is paired with ἐμπειρία as indicating a science or art in contrast to the practice of that science or art. True love of the fine thus includes love of both abstract sciences and the practical application of those sciences. The same pairing of ἐπιστήμη with ἐμπειρία is found in fragment 10, line 37. See the commentary there for further discussion of the relation between the two terms. In fragment 6 ἐπιστήμη is paired with τέχνη (τῶν τε ἐπιστημῶν καὶ τῶν τεχνῶν), but it is unclear in that case whether a sharp distinction is being made between “science” and “skill” or whether the two terms are to be taken together as comprising all organized bodies of knowledge (see the commentary *ad loc.*).

Lines 2–7 – The grammar of this long sentence is difficult. The key is to recognize that the whole sentence is governed by ὑπάρχειν, used in its impersonal sense to mean “the fact is that” or “it is the case that” (LSJ s.v. v), although these translations are often too strong and I have chosen to translate simply “is.” Meineke’s emendation to ὑπάρχειν from the manuscript reading ὑπάρχει continues the indirect discourse depending on ἔλεγον in the previous sentence. The articular infinitive τὸ γὰρ ἀγαπᾶν καὶ στέργειν, “to prize and to love” can then either be understood as the accusative typical with ὑπάρχειν in its impersonal uses or as the subject of ὑπάρχειν in indirect discourse, without any significant difference in meaning. The same articular infinitive should also be understood in the phrase starting with ὡσαύτως, which is constructed in parallel with the previous phrase, “to prize and love customs and practices that are fine, just as also [to prize and love] those kinds of knowledge and skill which are fine and honorable.” Both of these phrases governed by the articular infinitive are linked to the final infinitive phrase ἀληθῶς εἶναι φιλοκάλους, “truly to be lovers of what is beautiful and fine,” by ὑπάρχειν. There is a slight anacoluthon here, in that, instead of the plural, “lovers of what is beautiful and fine,” in the predicate, we might have expected a noun-adjective phrase in the singular, “true love of what is beautiful and fine,” or the neuter singular of the adjective, agreeing with the articular infinitive, “truly loving what is beautiful and fine.” Wachsmuth’s emendation to the genitive singular, a genitive of characteristic, “is truly characteristic of the lover of what is beautiful and fine,” is an attempt to get around the anacoluthon. The anacoluthon is not so awkward, however, that we need to resort to emendation, and it appears that the plural was introduced for simple variation since the noun-adjective pair, “true love of what is beautiful and fine,” is used in the last line of the fragment.

In the first phrase governed by the articular infinitive, the manuscript reading puts the objects of ἀγαπᾶν καὶ στέργειν in the genitive case (τῶν καλῶν ἔθῶν . . .). Both of these verbs can take the genitive but this construction is rare and the accusative is much more common. In the parallel phrase beginning with ὡσαύτως, moreover, the object is in the accusative (τὰς καλὰς καὶ εὐσχήμονας). It thus seems more likely that the manuscripts are corrupt in the first phrase and we should emend in order to have an accusative subject (τὰ καλὰ – using the neuter because ἔθῶν and ἐπιτηδευμάτων are neuter) in parallel to the second clause; this also produces a pleasing chiasmic structure, τὰ καλὰ τῶν ἔθῶν τε καὶ ἐπιτηδευμάτων . . . τῶν ἐπιστημῶν τε καὶ ἐμπειριῶν τὰς καλὰς καὶ εὐσχήμονας.

Line 2 – ἀγαπᾶν καὶ στέργειν: These two verbs are often virtual synonyms and there is no indication that any important distinction is intended between them here. In the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1168a1–3) Aristotle describes poets as having an exaggerated affection (ὑπεραγαπῶσι) for their poems and as loving (στέργοντες)

them like their own children. This usage is typical in that ἀγαπάω is somewhat more common with things and στέργω often refers to the love between parents and children, but Aristotle uses them almost as synonyms. Irwin consistently translates ἀγαπάω as “like” and στέργω as “be fond of,” in Aristotle, so that he renders this passage in the *Nicomachean Ethics* as “they dearly like their own poems, and are fond of them as though they were their own children” (1985: 251). However, “dearly like,” is not very felicitous in English and shows that “like” is perhaps too weak a translation. LSJ suggest that, when contrasted with φιλέω, ἀγαπάω “implies regard rather than affection,” although they also note that the two verbs are often interchanged. So in this context, where things rather than people are the objects of the verbs, I suggest that ἀγαπάω be translated “prize” (LSJ s.v. II) as indicating an emotion directed at things and implying regard and στέργω be translated by the more general and slightly stronger term “love.”

This passage of Aristoxenus is the earliest example of the two verbs joined by a simple καί. This combination next appears in the third-century Cynic philosopher, Teles, who says that an individual “prizes and loves” (ἀγαπᾷ καὶ στέργει) himself (*Περὶ ἀπαθείας* 57.6). The pairing is also found later in the pseudo-Pythagorean Metopos (117.5–7 Thesleff) but Metopos is full of Aristotelian terms such as προαίρεσις and the contrast between the ἄλογον and the διανοητικόν parts of the soul, while such later technical Aristotelian terminology is totally absent from this fragment of Aristoxenus.

Line 4 – εὐσχήμονας: This adjective picks out the kinds of knowledge and skills that are seemly, decent and honorable. See the commentary on fragment 9, lines 65–6 for further discussion of this adjective; see also the use of ἀσχημοσύνη and ἀσχήμων in fragment 3.

Line 7 – λάφυρα: This noun is found first in Aeschylus and refers to the spoils taken by the victor in battle and which bring him glory. Such spoils were often dedicated to the gods. Thus the herald in Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon* reports that the Argive expedition took Troy and on their return nailed the spoils to the temples of the gods in Greece (578). The noun appears eight times in the three major tragedians. It does not appear in Herodotus or Thucydides but is used twice by Xenophon. In Stobaeus 4.34.60 there is a series of definitions of a human being according to “Aristotle” one of which defines a human being as “the spoils of opportunity.” Presumably the idea here is that our individual character as human beings is what we win from opportunity. There are no uses in extant texts of Plato or Aristotle, or in the orators Demosthenes, Isocrates, or Lysias. It is more common in later Greek, appearing over twenty times in Polybius and over seventy in Plutarch. I have found no parallel for κείμαι with λάφυρα. For an interpretation of what it means to call ordinary love of what is fine the spoils of true love of what is fine, see the overview of the argument above.

17 | Fragment 6: Learning Must be Willing (36 W)

Stobaeus, *Eclogae* 2.31.119 [περὶ ἀγωγῆς καὶ παιδείας].

Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων·

ἔφασκον δὲ καὶ τὰς μαθήσεις πάσας τῶν τε ἐπιστημῶν καὶ τῶν 1
τεχνῶν τὰς μὲν ἐκουσίους ὀρθὰς τε εἶναι καὶ εἰς τέλος 2
ἀφικνεῖσθαι, τὰς δὲ ἀκουσίους φαύλους τε καὶ ἀτελεῖς γίνεσθαι. 3

Translation

From the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus

They said also that all learning both of sciences and of arts that was willing was both correct and also attained its end, but when unwilling was both inferior and did not attain its end.

Overview of the Argument

This fragment presents several problems, largely as a result of its brevity. It argues that certain types of learning are more successful when undertaken willingly rather than unwillingly. The fragment provides no specific examples and uses terminology that is so general that it is difficult to be certain of exactly what is meant. Two sorts of learning, that of sciences and that of arts, are mentioned. We might suppose that the mathematical disciplines such as geometry would be included under sciences, while more practically oriented activities such as ship-building would be included under arts (see the detailed commentary), but it is impossible to be certain. Again, who is supposed to be willing, for learning to take place properly? The natural assumption is that the reference is to the student, but it is not impossible that both teacher and student are required to be willing, since Iamblichus makes such a point at *VP* 183 (learning is correct “when both are willing, both the teacher and the

learner” – ἀμφοτέρων βουλομένων, τοῦ τε διδάσκοντος καὶ τοῦ μανθάνοντος), in a passage (= fr. 10) that is clearly derived from the *Pythagorean Precepts* and may even be derived from fragment 6 (see the commentary on fr. 10, lines 51–6). Did Iamblichus find the idea that both student and teacher must be willing in Aristoxenus or is he developing it on his own, in parallel with the idea that in the state both ruler and ruled must be willing, which is expressed in lines 47–51 of fragment 10 (cf. fr. 2, lines 3–6)? Finally, why exactly must learning be willing? Two points are made: learning must be willing both in order to be correct and also to reach its goal. No further explanation of either of these points is given. The argument may be that students who are unwilling do not learn the various parts of the art or science correctly (e.g., an individual proof, or how to construct a specific part of a ship). Uninterested students might try to get by with appearing to learn or with a very partial grasp of what they are doing. Further, such students never reach the overall goal for which the learning was undertaken in the first place. They learn only parts of the given art or science and often learn those badly and do not have the motivation to put the parts together in order to gain an overall proficiency.

Plato makes a similar point at *Resp.* 536e. At this point in the *Republic*, Plato is arguing that the mathematical studies that he has presented as preliminary to dialectic should not be presented to children in the form of compulsory instruction. However, after making this specific point about children, he goes on to apply it not just to children but to all ages. Although Plato and the *Precepts* are adopting a similar point of view the language used to develop it is quite different. Plato uses the language of freedom and slavery (μετὰ δουλείας τὸν ἐλεύθερον), which finds no parallel in fragment 6; this uses the adjectives willing and unwilling (ἐκούσιους . . . ἀκούσιους), which do not appear in Plato. Again Plato stresses that nothing learned under compulsion (βίαιον) is lasting (ἔμμονον), but neither of these words is used in fragment 6. The issue of permanence in learning is not mentioned in this fragment, which instead talks about willing and unwilling learning reaching their ends or not (εἰς τέλος ἀφικνεῖσθαι . . . ἀτελεῖς γίνεσθαι). Plato, on the other hand, makes no use of the language of ends. It is thus clear that Aristoxenus did not compose fragment 6 with this passage of the *Republic* directly in mind as I have argued in [Chapter 9](#) of the Introduction.

Plato gives a different reason for avoiding compulsion in education than the *Pythagorean Precepts*; he argues that no learning that is forced on the mind is lasting (ἐμμονον). Compulsory education simply does not stick with us. Plato then returns to the specific case of children. How then are we to get them to study difficult subjects? Are we to limit teaching to those rare souls who naturally find advanced mathematics attractive? Or should we compel them to study math? Plato provides a different solution. He argues that children should be kept at their studies not by compulsion but by making those studies play (*Resp.* 537a). In a few other passages, he makes the related but distinct point that young children's play should be study, should teach them things (*Resp.* 424e, *Leg.* 819b–c). Here in the *Precepts* there is no indication that the learning in question is limited to small children, and, as is noted above, Plato makes the point quite generally that forced learning is not appropriate for a free person. It is not clear that making study play is the answer for adults or even young adult learners. In the *Laws*, Plato argues that laws are better if they are not simply imposed by force but are also accompanied by persuasion in the form of preludes to actual laws (e.g., 723e). This suggests that a way to remove the compulsion from learning for older students would be to persuade the student of the value of what they are going to learn and thus induce them to undertake the difficulties of the subject willingly. Fragment 6 makes no mention of either of Plato's ways of avoiding compulsion in learning, i.e. by making it play or by persuasion of the usefulness of the subject, which surely suggests that it was not composed with Plato in mind.

The sciences are mentioned again in fragment 5 of the *Precepts*, which argues that true love of the fine consists in part of love of fine and seemly sciences and practices, in contrast with the view of the many that it is things necessary and useful for life that are what are really fine. This point may in turn suggest that these sciences and practices are to be loved for their own sake rather than just for their utility. If this latter inference is correct, then it may be that unwilling learning of sciences does not reach its end because the end of learning sciences is to love them for their own sake. We clearly cannot love them for their own sake, if we only pursue them unwillingly and under compulsion. So the Pythagoreans might think that no one should be forced to learn the sciences and that only those who have an active desire to learn them should be trained in them. This leaves open the possibility that we should

try to convince the young that the sciences are fine things and should be pursued for their own sake. However, if we cannot engender a genuine desire in them to learn the sciences, we should not force anyone to do so, because such compulsion undercuts the goal of loving such sciences for their own sake.

Detailed Commentary

Line 1 – **ἔφασκον**: This verb is commonly used in introducing precepts. See fragment 2 (twice) and fragment 7.

Line 1 – **τὰς μαθήσεις πάσας**: The Greek noun *μάθησις* usually refers to “learning” from a teacher of some sort. This is made explicit in the Pythagorean tradition by Archytas, who identifies two ways of gaining knowledge that we lack: learning from another (*μαθόντα παρ’ ἄλλω*) or discovering for ourselves (fr. 3). So the type of learning that must be voluntary in order to be correct and reach its goal is specifically learning from the precept or example of another person rather than through our own investigation. This is borne out by the specification of the learning as “of the sciences and arts,” since such bodies of knowledge are typically handed on from teacher to pupil or master to apprentice.

Lines 1–2 – **τῶν τε ἐπιστημῶν καὶ τῶν τεχνῶν**: The pairing of *ἐπιστήμη* and *τέχνη* is common in fourth-century philosophical authors such as Plato and Aristotle but it is also found in authors like Isocrates (*Panath.* 29 and 30). It is often not clear how strong a distinction is being made between the two terms. Thus, in the *Theaetetus* *ἐπιστήμη* is first identified with the kinds of things that Theodorus teaches, e.g., geometry, but cobblery and the arts (*τέχναι*) of the other craftsmen are immediately added as other examples of *ἐπιστήμη* (146c8). As well as meaning “knowledge” *ἐπιστήμη* can refer to any organized body of knowledge, which would include things that we call “sciences” but also “arts” such as cobblery and gymnastics. So the two terms are often used together to designate the whole spectrum of organized bodies of knowledge without stressing any distinction between the two (e.g., Arist. *APr.* 46a22). Thus at *Republic* 522c every art and science (*τέχνη τε καὶ ἐπιστήμη*) is said to necessarily involve number and calculation. Of course, *τέχνη* can be understood more narrowly not just as an organized body of knowledge but as a craft that produces something (e.g., a shoe) in contrast to sciences, which do not produce anything but grasp scientific laws and necessary truths. Here in the *Precepts* it could thus be that a sharp distinction is being made between sciences like those in the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music), found already in Archytas (fr. 1), and crafts like cobblery. However, nothing in the fragment turns on such a distinction and it

seems just as likely that “sciences and arts” are being grouped together as organized bodies of knowledge to which the strictures of the precept apply without distinction. The actual practice of these sciences and arts would be indicated by the word ἐμπειρία. See the commentary on fragment 10, line 37.

Lines 2–3 – ἐκούσιους . . . ἀκούσιους: This distinction between what is willing and unwilling or voluntary and involuntary is common in Greek authors (e.g., Thuc. 3.64.5; Antiphon *In novercam* 26) whether philosophical or not. Aristotle gives a careful philosophical discussion of the voluntary and involuntary (*EN* 1109b30–1111b4ff.), but there is no hint of Aristotle’s distinctions here in fragment 6.

Lines 2–3 – ὀρθάς . . . φαύλους: These adjectives are very rarely paired. As applied to persons, φαῦλος often refers to the lower class, the mean or the common. As applied to things it also picks out what is cheap, paltry or ordinary but in reference to both persons and things it can mean “bad” and its typical opposite is ἀγαθός (“bad . . . good,” e.g., Xen. *Symp.* 4.47). For ὀρθός the typical opposite is ψευδής (“correct . . . wrong,” Pl. *Tht.* 161d; *Crat.* 430d). Learning is described in other Greek authors as coming about correctly insofar as it grasps the truth of the subject matter (Pl. *Leg.* 667c), but learning is not elsewhere described as φαῦλος, although Sophocles talks of a bad or inferior teacher (fr. 771).

Lines 2–3 – εἰς τέλος ἀφικνεῖσθαι . . . ἀτελεῖς γίνεσθαι: The use of ἀφικνεῖσθαι with εἰς τέλος clearly indicates that τέλος is the end or goal at which the learning is directed and accordingly that ἀτελεῖς in the second part of the sentence should be understood as indicating learning that does not reach its goal or end. This is by far the earliest use of εἰς τέλος with ἀφικνεῖσθαι, the next earliest being Galen. However, the expression is not common even in later Greek with only about ten uses up to the fifth century AD. In earlier Greek εἰς τέλος is used in similar expressions with some form of the verb ἔρχομαι. Thus Plato refers to going through to the end of an argument (*Phlb.* 23b – εἰς τέλος ἐπεξέλθης) or of runners having come to the goal (*Resp.* 613c – εἰς τέλος ἐλθόντες) and receiving a prize. Aristotle talks of something not reaching the end that is its natural function (*De an.* 434b1 – εἰς τέλος οὐκ ὄν ἔλθοι). In the earlier period it was thus more common to talk of coming (ἔρχομαι) to the end rather than arriving (ἀφικνεῖσθαι) at the end, but the move from one expression to the other is very natural and there is no problem with supposing that the usage by Aristoxenus (or the Pythagoreans) is an early example of the usage of ἀφικνεῖσθαι rather than ἔρχομαι, a usage that became a little more common, although never very common, in later Greek.

18 | Fragment 7: Luck (41 W)

Stobaeus, *Eclogae* 1.6.18 [περὶ τύχης ἢ ταυτομάτου]

Ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων·

περὶ δὲ τύχης τάδ' ἔφασκον, εἶναι μὲν τι καὶ δαιμόνιον μέρος 1
αὐτῆς, γενέσθαι γὰρ ἐπίπνοιάν τινα παρὰ τοῦ δαιμονίου τῶν 2
ἀνθρώπων ἐνίοις ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον ἢ ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον, καὶ εἶναι 3
φανερῶς κατ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο τοὺς μὲν εὐτυχεῖς τοὺς δὲ ἀτυχεῖς. 4
καταφανέστατον δὲ εἶναι τοῦτο <τῷ> τοὺς μὲν ἀπροβουλεύτως 5
καὶ εἰκῇ τι πράττοντας πολλάκις κατατυγχάνειν, τοὺς δὲ 6
προβουλευομένους καὶ προνοουμένους ὀρθῶς τι πράττειν 7
ἀποτυγχάνειν. εἶναι δὲ καὶ ἕτερον τύχης εἶδος, καθ' ὃ οἱ μὲν 8
εὐφυεῖς καὶ εὐστοχοί, οἱ δὲ ἀφυεῖς τε καὶ ἐναντίαν ἔχοντες φύσιν 9
βλάστοιεν, ὧν οἱ μὲν εὐθυβολοῖεν ἐφ' ὃ τι ἂν ἐπιβάλλωνται, οἱ δὲ 10
ἀποπίπτοιεν τοῦ σκοποῦ, μηδέποτε τῆς διανοίας αὐτῶν 11
εὐστόχως φερομένης, ἀλλὰ ἀεὶ ταρασσομένης. ταύτην δὲ τὴν 12
ἀτυχίαν σύμφυτον εἶναι καὶ οὐκ ἐπεΐσακτον. 13

1 ἔφασκον] ἔφασκεν P² μὲν τι] Usener μέντοι FP 2 γάρ] F δ' P
ἐπίπνοιάν] ἐπίπνοιά P τινα] τινι P² 4 κατ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο] κατὰ
ταυτὸ τοῦτο P 4–5 τοὺς μὲν . . . τοῦτο] om. F 5 <τῷ>
Usener ἀπροβουλεύτως] P ἀπροβουλεύτους F 9 τε] om. P
10 βλάστοιεν] Wyttenbach βλάπτοιεν codd. εὐθυβολοῖεν]
Jacobs εὐθύβουλοι εἶεν F εὐθύβουλοι εἶναι P ἐπιβάλλωνται]
Wachsmuth ἐπιβάλλωνται FP 12 ἀεὶ ταρασσομένης]
Wachsmuth καὶ ταρασσομένης FP διαταρασσομένης Meineke
<φυρομένης> καὶ ταρασσομένης Hense <παραλλαττούσης> καὶ
ταρασσομένης Kranz (cf. Plato, *Theaetetus* 194a) 13 ἀτυχίαν] P
εὐτυχίαν F

Translation

From the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus

Concerning luck they said the following: A part of it is divine, for some inspiration arises from the divine for some people, either for the better or for the worse, and it is clearly in accordance with precisely this that some are lucky and some are unlucky. This is most clearly seen when those who do something with no prior consideration and without plan are often successful, while those who do something after planning in advance and taking correct precautions fail. But there is also another kind of luck, in accordance with which some people are born gifted and with the ability to hit the mark, but others are born dull and with the opposite nature. Of these the ones hit the mark in whatever they undertake, but the others fail to obtain their object, since their thought is never borne towards the target but is always confused. This bad luck is inborn and not imposed from outside.

The Pythagorean Conception of Luck

According to fragment 7, the Pythagoreans made a distinction between two types of luck. The first sort of luck is assigned a divine origin. This kind of luck can be seen most clearly (καταφανεστάτον) where the success or failure of people is contrary to what we would expect based on their behavior. It is seen either when someone who has done no prior planning and who acts at random nonetheless succeeds or, conversely, when someone who has planned in advance and who has taken all the correct precautions still fails. In such cases the Pythagoreans concluded that there must have been some inspiration arising from the gods (γενέσθαι . . . ἐπίπνοϊαν τινα παρὰ τοῦ δαιμονίου), which led to the better or worse result, in defiance of the efforts of the individuals involved. This sort of luck is imposed from outside the individual (ἐπείσακτον) by the divine. The second sort of luck is not initially named, but, in the last line of the fragment, it is described as arising from our nature (σύμφυτον) in contrast to the first sort of luck, which was contrary to our nature and imposed from outside (ἐπείσακτον). This sort of luck leads some people to be born with genius and the ability to hit the mark, while others are born dull and unable to hit the mark. The first sort always hit whatever mark

they aim at, while the second miss their target. We are told that the second sort miss their target because their thought is always confused and never moves directly toward the goal. This sort of luck sounds almost like a genetic endowment, which allows some people to see clearly how to achieve their ends, while others remain muddled as to what to do. We could interpret this sort of luck as a propensity for lucky hunches, but the reference to thought (τῆς διανοίας) suggests that it also includes cases where an individual succeeds because she reasons properly, although we might not be able to say why she came up with the correct reasoning, while someone else did not. The second sort of luck does appear to proceed from the nature of the individual, and hence is described as inborn or natural, although we cannot say why any individual has the nature they do. The first sort of luck, on the other hand, leads to results that are completely contrary to what we would have expected based on the person's nature and actions and hence appears to be the result of some outside force.

The two types of luck distinguished by the Pythagoreans are thus clearly set out, but the discussion of luck is not presented in the form of precepts and provides no guidance on how to act, so it is reasonable to ask why the concept of luck was discussed at all in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. The way in which the two sorts of luck are presented suggests a reasonably clear answer to this question. Both sorts of luck provide an explanation as to why human beings succeed or not in light of their attempts at planning and reasoning about their goals. The *Precepts* are Pythagorean guidelines as to how to live the best sort of life; they represent a plan of how to attain it. Planning is an important part of the program of the *Pythagorean Precepts* and the importance of forethought (πρόνοιαν) is particularly emphasized with regard to the procreation of children (fr. 9, lines 149–151 and 163). Fragment 7 shows, however, that the Pythagoreans recognized that even people who followed the plan and did take forethought did not always succeed while others even had trouble following it.

Someone might object to the Pythagoreans: "I followed the precepts but my life has still not worked out well and person X did not follow them and he is flourishing." The Pythagoreans respond: "Following our precepts usually does lead to the best life, but there are some cases where the person who follows our precepts does not succeed and those who not only do not follow our precepts but even live their life without any plan

do succeed. In these cases some external forces (e.g., the gods) are clearly intervening in human affairs and causing the person who follows the proper precepts to fail and the person who does not follow any plan to succeed. We are not clear why the gods would do this, so we attribute this result to chance but call it divine chance, because it seems to come from the gods.” In another case the Pythagoreans might observe that person X seems to grasp the precepts quickly and apply them easily to her life, while person Y just can’t seem to understand them and has difficulty applying them to his life. In this case the Pythagoreans do not see any outside force impinging on the person’s actions, but it rather appears that one person has a natural gift for understanding and applying the precepts while the other has a disability in the same regard. There is no clear reason for this difference so it is assigned to luck again, but this time the luck seems to be inborn (a luck of birth or a genetic endowment) rather than imposed from without. It is true that the comments on the influence of the circumstances under which a child is conceived on its later nature in fragment 9 might suggest that a person’s nature is determined by those circumstances (fr. 4 – parents should not be drunk or over-full of food). But there are a myriad of factors to consider in providing the best circumstances for the birth of a child and those circumstances will not generally be known to the child or others apart from its parents so the nature of the child will still appear to be the result of chance rather than any clearly defined causes. Thus the Pythagorean theory of luck appears to have been developed in order to explain two different cases in which the program proposed by the *Precepts* fails to produce the expected results. Individuals will fail to achieve a flourishing life in other cases as well, but in such cases the cause can be clearly identified as a specific faulty understanding of a precept, a specific failure to apply the principle properly, or a specific failure in the self-discipline required to follow a precept. In all of these cases the failure is explicable, in contrast to the two cases just discussed where the inexplicable nature of the failure led the Pythagoreans to appeal to two different sorts of luck.

If this is the correct account of the view of luck in the *Precepts*, a potential conflict arises with a guiding principle of the *Precepts* which is set forth in fragment 8. This argues that it is useful for human beings to believe that the gods exist and both pay attention to and care about human affairs. Human beings have a nature that is hubristic, that is insolent and has a tendency to go beyond acceptable limits, and they

accordingly need supervision by an authority that can instill self-control and order, i.e. the gods. Fragment 7 agrees with this outlook insofar as it recognizes the existence of the gods and their interest in human life. However, fragment 7 also suggests that the gods do not always reward good behavior or punish bad behavior. According to fragment 7, divine influence is specifically visible when our careful planning and forethought lead to failure and our careless actions lead to success. The problem is that if the gods cannot be counted on to reward good behavior and punish bad behavior, then their function in keeping human beings in line, which is central in fragment 8, is undercut. The gods are so erratic that it is pointless to try to please them so that we might as well indulge our hubristic nature.

One way of solving this contradiction would be to suppose that in fragment 7 the Pythagoreans are saying that it only appears to us that the gods are rewarding the careless and punishing the careful; if we understood more we would see that this is not the case and that the gods are only the cause of good. However, nothing in the language or presentation of fragment 7 suggests this interpretation. It seems to be presented as a simple fact that we sometimes fail despite careful planning and preparation and sometime succeed when we have done none of the requisite planning. Another way to resolve the contradiction is to suppose that the gods do pay attention to human life and generally reward good behavior but in some cases, for reasons that are unclear, they do not. However, this surprising behavior on their part is not common enough to lead us to believe that they do not care about our behavior and to think that we can act badly with impunity. On this reading, the *Precepts* are more directed at providing a practical guide to living a good life than insuring a coherent philosophical system. It is useful to believe that gods exist and care about our behavior but we also have to recognize the fact that on occasion they at least seem to support those who are careless and abandon those who take proper care.

The Pythagorean view would then seem to be that the gods do not control everything or even very much in human life. Even in cases that we would label as examples of luck only one type is labeled divine; in other cases good or bad luck seems to be a result of our nature. Moreover, the success of most of our actions is determined by our own actions, which depend on our own reasoning and planning. This is the basic supposition behind writing the *Precepts* in the first place: human

beings are in control of their actions and need the guidance of precepts to help them to reason well and make good decisions about how best to live their lives. In extreme cases we may possess a nature that causes us to have a tendency to reason exceptionally well or badly. It is regular behavior, since it proceeds from our nature, but why we should regularly behave in this way is inexplicable, so that the Pythagoreans attribute it to luck, a luck that is inborn and grows up with us. In other cases, whatever the cause of our reasoning well or badly, some external force, the gods, causes us surprisingly to act differently than our planning and reasoning would suggest. There is also nothing much we can do about this, but it happens rarely enough that it does not undercut the basic belief that the gods support us in planning carefully and reasoning well and that the majority of our actions are under our own control.

Terminology of the Fragment

In *Physics* 2.6 Aristotle distinguishes τὸ αὐτόματον as the more general term (“chance”) from τύχη, which refers to the narrower class of chance events that apply only to human beings (“luck”). It is true, however, that elsewhere in Aristotle and in other Greek authors τύχη can also be used as the general term “chance.” Since the *Pythagorean Precepts* only discuss τύχη in the context of human beings I have translated it “luck” in fragment 7 and in the overview of the Pythagorean theory of τύχη, which I have just given. In what follows “luck” will also be the typical translation for τύχη, although in some cases “luck and chance” will be used in order to capture the broader use of τύχη.

The Pythagorean Account of Luck in the Context of the Presocratics

Aristotle is the first person to present a systematic theory of chance or luck (*Ph.* 2.4–6, *EE* 8.2; cf. [*MM*] 2.8). Fragment 7 shows that the Pythagoreans, while not providing anything like as full an account as Aristotle does, did anticipate him to a small degree in presenting an account that distinguishes two kinds of luck. The relation between their account and Aristotle’s will be discussed below. But, first, it is appropriate to ask how the account of luck by the fourth-century Pythagoreans

compares with earlier accounts of luck in the Greek intellectual tradition? From Homer through the lyric poets to authors of both prose and poetry in the fifth century, luck is a very common topic. Thus, Archilochus (fr. 16 West) proclaims, “Luck (τύχη) and destiny (μοῖρα), Pericles, give a man everything.” However, these authors present isolated comments on the nature of luck rather than a systematic account that tries to define it or to distinguish its different kinds. It is often associated with the gods (Aegeus says that he is childless because of luck sent from some god [δαίμονός τινος τύχη] – Eur. *Med.* 671), but the precise characteristics of this “divine luck” are not defined nor is it distinguished from other sorts of luck as it is in the *Precepts*. In the specifically philosophic tradition τύχη is rarely mentioned by early authors. It appears eight times in the ethical fragments of Democritus but only once elsewhere in the fragments of the Presocratics (Empedocles B103). Luck is important in two main contexts in the Presocratic tradition: 1) It has often been thought to have played a role in Presocratic cosmology so that the cosmos or parts of it arise by chance; 2) It plays a role in ethical contexts in Democritus and the Sophists.

The discussion of chance in Presocratic cosmology gets its start from Aristotle. He famously complained that the early Greek cosmologists did not directly discuss chance when presenting the causes of generation and destruction, even though some of them, e.g., Empedocles (*Ph.* 196a22) and Democritus (*Ph.* 196a25), made use of it in their accounts of the cosmos. Aristotle’s complaint is supported by the lack of any specific references to τύχη in the fragments of the early Greek cosmologists apart from the one fragment of Empedocles. Simplicius in his commentary on Aristotle (CAG 9.330.31–9.331.17) points to an additional six passages where Empedocles appeals to the notion of chance, mainly through his use of verbs, although he does not directly discuss the concept. In these passages Empedocles presents things as arising through one element “happening” to meet another (B85 τύχε, B59 συνέκυρσεν). Similarly Aristotle thought that for Democritus all things arise through chance combinations of atoms, although there is no reference to chance in the surviving cosmological fragments of the atomists. Many modern scholars would argue, however, that both Empedocles and Democritus thought that there was a determinate cause for every event and thing in the cosmos and that if they made any reference to chance it would have only been a recognition that the

interactions of atoms or elements are too complex for us to be able to specify the precise cause and a denial that the cosmos came to be by design (Barnes 1982: 423–6; Taylor 1999: 188–95). This use of chance would be perfectly compatible with the emphasis that these authors place on necessity in other passages, including Leucippus' assertion that "Nothing happens in vain, but everything from reason and by necessity" (fr. 1). The nature of the atomists' basic principles (atoms and void) or of Empedocles' four elements lead to results that are necessary given those natures but to humans the combinations of atoms or of elements appear to be fortuitous, since the interactions are so complex (see Guthrie 1965: 163–4, 416–19 and Dudley 2012: 135–53). Thus the world is in fact governed by a natural necessity, although it appears to come to be by chance. Even outside of the philosophical tradition the Greeks connected chance with necessity so that in Greek tragedy there are references to "necessary chance" (Soph. *El.* 48). In his discussion of these issues Aristotle makes no mention of the Pythagoreans and the word τύχη does not appear in the genuine fragments of the early Pythagorean cosmologist Philolaus or of his pupil Archytas. It thus appears that the Pythagoreans did not appeal to chance in their cosmology and that the discussion of luck in the *Precepts* does not owe anything to its role in early Greek cosmology.

The role of luck in ethical contexts in the Presocratics and sophists has been much less studied. In part this is a result of the fact that, while Aristotle does make clear references to his predecessors when discussing luck in a cosmological context (*Ph.* 2.4–6), he does not mention specific predecessors when discussing it in an ethical context in *EE* 8. 2 (cf. [MM] 2.8). In part it is the result of lack of evidence. The scattered references in the sophists do not reveal any systematic view of luck. In his *Praise of Helen* (6), Gorgias gives as one of his arguments to absolve her from guilt, that, if the responsibility for her actions is assigned to luck and God, then she cannot be found responsible, since God is stronger than human beings. After initially listing luck separately from the gods Gorgias treats luck and God as equivalent causes for the sake of his argument and thus clearly regards luck as something divine and more powerful than human beings. There is a single passing reference to luck in both Thrasymachus (B1) and Antiphon (B65). If the play *Pirithous* is by Critias rather than Euripides (Collard and Cropp 2008: 2: 629–35) then he said "Luck is an ally to those who think well" (B21), which could

of course mean that luck plays either no role or a very small role in life, while human reason plays the dominant role. It is only with Democritus that we can attempt to find a coherent theory of luck, since eight of the ethical fragments deal with the topic.

Even Democritus, however, does not seem to have put forth a coherent theory of luck. None of the fragments that discuss luck define it or distinguish its different kinds. It might be possible to construct a coherent account from them but they give the impression of a series of independent observations about the role of luck in human life. We find the common observation that all human beings are subject to luck and that we should not enjoy our neighbor's misfortunes forgetting that we too are subject to it (B293). This same theme of the power of luck is found in the comment that, while daring may be the beginning of an action, luck determines its end (B269). The generosity but unreliability of luck is stressed in other fragments that praise nature and moderation as less generous but as providing a reliable self-sufficiency (B176 and B210). This theme is further developed in the warning that the generosity of luck can lead one to attempt things that are beyond one's power so that it is better to stick to what is reasonable (B3). Similarly B197 says that fools are shaped by the gifts of chance when it is better to follow the gifts of wisdom. Wealth in particular is seen to be subject to chance (B288). Finally B119 suggests that luck is the creation of human beings, who want to cover up their own lack of planning. Chance, in fact, rarely conflicts with intelligence. The dominant theme seems to be that luck can deceive us with promises of great success, whereas we are better guided by reason and moderation, which prevail in most cases. Some of this is consistent with what the Pythagoreans say about luck but nothing here suggests that the Pythagoreans derived their ideas about luck from Democritus. The Pythagorean emphasis is on the fact that sometimes luck does thwart the actions of reason, so that following the *Precepts* will not always lead to success, whereas Democritus is warning us not to be deceived by the apparent generosity of luck so as to rely on it rather than reason or virtue.

The Pythagorean Account of Luck and Plato

Although Plato uses the word τύχη 102 times in his writings (Zimmermann 1966: 11–12), most of these are non-technical usages

that correspond to common usages of the word in a wide range of Greek authors. There are three main categories into which these uses fall (Dudley 2012: 157–8): 1) it can neutrally refer to what has happened (*Crito* 46b) or what the situation is (*Phaedo* 84e, where it is distinguished from συμφορά = “misfortune”), 2) it can mean “misfortune” (*Phaedo* 117c), and 3) it can refer to “good fortune” (e.g., *Laws* 640d), in which case it is usually explicitly modified by the adjective “good” (ἀγαθός).

Plato provides neither a systematic discussion of the concept of chance/luck such as is found in Aristotle, nor any enumeration of different kinds of luck/chance such as we find in fragment 7 of the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Plato’s most detailed philosophical discussion of chance is found in his consideration of the origins of the universe. In a famous passage in the *Laws* (889a–c) Plato reports that some people assert that the greatest and most beautiful things come into being by nature and chance. They say that the four elements (fire, water, earth, and air) exist by nature and chance. It is by the necessary mixtures of these elements resulting from their chance combinations that the whole universe and everything in it has come to be. These are clearly the same thinkers to whom Aristotle refers in *Physics* 2.4–6, e.g., Empedocles and Democritus, and who combine chance with necessity (See the section on the Presocratics above).

Plato, of course, rejects this explanation of the universe solely in terms of nature (necessity) and chance. In the *Laws* he goes on to argue that the soul is prior to the natural necessity represented by the material elements. In the *Timaeus* he begins his account of the cosmos with the works of reason: the works of a divine artificer, the demiurge, constructing the cosmos in accord with the rational pattern provided by the realm of forms. However, at 47e–48a Plato turns from these works of reason back to what comes to be through necessity. This second sort of cause is explicitly described by Plato as devoid of intelligence and as producing “chance results, without order” (46e – tr. Guthrie 1978: 273). So the sort of chance that the Presocratics connected to necessity and nature still plays an important role in Plato’s cosmos as the intractable matter on which the demiurge tries to impose rational order.

There are a few other passages in which Plato seems to develop another more positive view of chance. In the *Laws* (709b–c) the Athenian puts forth the view that “god controls all things and, along

with god, chance and occasion control all human affairs.” It is not completely clear what relation Plato envisages between chance and god here. However, one plausible reading is that Plato sees chance as subordinate to god and thus sees what humans call chance as really the working of divine providence. In light of Plato’s assertion in the *Republic* that god is only the cause of good (379b–c), we would need to suppose that he thinks that god is only the cause of good fortune and merited bad fortune but is not the cause of unmerited good or bad fortune. Dudley argues that this is the dominant role of chance in Plato’s philosophy, so that for Plato chance is the name that human beings give to apparently inexplicable events that are really the result of divine providence (2012: 5). Dudley further argues that Aristotle is referring to Plato among others at *Physics* 196b6–7 when he mentions that “there are those who think that τύχη is a cause on the one hand, but is unclear to the human mind, as if it were something divine and a mysterious power” (tr. Dudley 2012: 4). It seems more reasonable, however, to say with Guthrie that Aristotle is referring to a widespread view according to which apparently chance events are in fact the working out of divine providence (1981: 238). However, even in the passage of the *Laws* it cannot be the case that chance is totally subordinate to god for Plato. In the immediately preceding passage the Athenian has entertained the possibility that chances and misfortunes make all our laws for us. In accordance with the latter passage of the *Laws* (889a–c) Plato immediately rejects this possibility and asserts in the passage quoted above (*Laws* 709b8) that god “pilots all things” (θεὸς μὲν πάντα . . . διακυβερνῶσι). The English translation “controls” is misleading, since it suggests that god’s piloting will always be successful, whereas the *Timaeus* makes clear that sometimes god cannot overcome the recalcitrance of the necessary cause. Accordingly it is a mistake to assume that when Plato goes on to say that “with god chance and occasion pilot all human things,” this means that chance is always subordinate to god and is just another name for divine providence. Just as in the case of Plato’s account of the origin of the world in the *Timaeus*, so here in the *Laws* chance cannot be eliminated from human life by reducing it to divine providence. Chance is circumscribed, however, by the piloting of god.

Thus, although Plato would probably agree that what is commonly called good luck is really just the workings of divine providence, his

primary view of chance is as active in the realm of the works of necessity, which god cannot completely overcome either in the functioning of the cosmos or in human life. How then does the view of chance that we find in the *Pythagorean Precepts* compare with what we find in Plato? Plato does have an implicit distinction between luck as a divine providence, which is always for the good, and luck as a work of necessity but he never comes close to making such a distinction explicit. Pythagorean divine luck does not agree with what Plato might call divine luck in that the Pythagoreans clearly envisage cases where divinities allow one who plans and reasons poorly to succeed and one who plans and reasons well to fail, while Plato explicitly says that god is only the cause of the good. The inborn luck of the Pythagoreans does appear similar to the role of chance in Plato's works of necessity in that the person is simply born with an innate tendency to hit the mark or miss it, but Plato, unlike the Pythagoreans, never discusses the working of this sort of luck within the individual.

Is the Pythagorean Account of Luck Derived from Aristotle?

Burkert (following Wehrli 1967 and Täger 1922) has argued that the Pythagorean account of luck presented in the *Pythagorean Precepts* is not Pythagorean at all and is in fact derived from Aristotle's ethics (1972: 108). In Chapter 9 of the Introduction, in my response to the standard interpretation of the *Precepts*, I have shown that neither of the two arguments he provides for this position stand up to scrutiny. Moreover, I show there that far from it being the case that the view of luck in the *Precepts* is modeled on that of Aristotle's, the *Precepts'* view of luck in fact agrees with a view that Aristotle reports and rejects in the *Eudemian Ethics* and thus is quite plausibly seen as the view to which Aristotle is responding. In addition to these points, it is important to note that the language and concepts in terms of which the concept of luck is developed in Aristotle and in the *Precepts* are quite different. This can be seen most clearly in Aristotle's consistent emphasis on the contrast between what results from luck and what results from intelligence (φρόνησις). He frequently describes the lucky as those who succeed although ἄλογος and ἄφρων. He uses the former term seven times in Chapter 2 and the latter term four times. In his concluding paragraph,

where he defines the two sorts of luck, he is emphatic that both types are ἄλογοι. Fragment 7 uses neither ἄλογος nor ἄφρων, terms that Aristotle used eleven times, even once. Again, the concept of impulse (ὁρμή) is crucial to Aristotle's account, the noun and related verb appearing seven times in [Chapter 2](#); they never appear in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Similarly the language that is emphasized in fragment 7 of the *Precepts* does not appear in Aristotle.

Luck Elsewhere in the Pythagorean Tradition

Luck does not seem to have been an important topic elsewhere in the early Pythagorean tradition. It does not appear in the fragments or testimonia of the two most important Pythagoreans of the fifth and fourth centuries, Philolaus and Archytas. Nor does it appear in connection with Pythagoras himself in the early tradition. The *acusmata*, some of which might go back to Pythagoras, and which the *Precepts* seem to develop in some cases, have nothing to say about luck. Nor is there much about luck in the three great accounts of the Pythagorean life in the later tradition. The word τύχη does not appear in Diogenes Laertius' life of Pythagoras and there are only two passing references in Porphyry's life. Iamblichus does connect Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans to the topic of luck in two places. In section 145 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, Iamblichus reports that the Pythagoreans "thought that nothing happened because of chance or luck but according to divine providence, especially to good and pious men." He illustrates this point by quoting an anecdote about the Pythagorean Thymaridas of Tarentum told by Androcydes in his work *On Pythagorean Symbols*. In the anecdote Thymaridas rejects the good wishes of a companion that he receive whatever he wants from the gods and instead says he wishes for what comes from the gods, not wishing to strive against divine providence. Androcydes' treatise probably belongs to the first century BC (Burkert 1972: 167 n. 7 and 175 n. 73) so this view of luck may be a creation of the later tradition. The evidence for Thymaridas' date is very ambiguous. He might belong to the same period or be as early as the fourth century (Burkert 1972: 442 n. 92). Here, clearly, divine providence controls everything so that properly speaking there is no luck and anything that we label luck is in fact the workings of providence. A similar view is

implied later on in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, when both Pythagoras and Abaris are presented as experts in divine providence, in a passage that is again likely to be of later composition and to derive from Apollonius (VP 215–17, 117.3 and 24 Deubner 1975; see Burkert 1972: 100; see also VP 151, 85.11 Deubner 1975). That the emphasis on divine foreknowledge as a central doctrine of Pythagoras is a creation of the later tradition is suggested by its connection with the late view that he made the monad a first principle in the doxographical tradition (DG 587.2 Epiphanius). This later emphasis on divine foreknowledge clearly has little to do with what we find in the *Precepts* where divine luck is just one of two kinds of luck and where even divine luck admits of cases where the gods seem to help the undeserving and thwart the deserving. It is interesting to note that while Iamblichus does use extensive passages from the *Pythagorean Precepts* in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, especially in sections 200–13, there is no trace of the discussion of luck that Stobaeus presents as an excerpt from the *Precepts*. What Iamblichus does present in section 145 is much closer to the Platonic and Aristotelian view in that it treats the gods as only the causes of good. Moreover, Iamblichus' use of the formulation ἐκ ταῦτομάτου . . . καὶ ἀπὸ τύχης (“from chance and from luck”) matches Aristotle's usage in mentioning both chance and luck, whereas the *Precepts* only refer to luck (τύχη). Thus, it seems possible that Iamblichus consciously rejected the account of luck found in the *Precepts* and preferred later accounts that gave the Pythagoreans a view much closer to that of Plato and Aristotle.

In the *Protrepticus* Iamblichus assigns yet a different view to Pythagoras himself, reporting that “he says that we are our own luck and good fortune” (12.18). This is commentary on verse 54 of the *Golden Verses*, which asserts that “human beings suffer miseries that are self-incurred.” Accordingly Iamblichus' comment is not any sort of quotation from Pythagoras but rather asserts that in verse 54 Pythagoras, as the supposed author of the *Golden Verses*, means that “we are our own luck and good fortune.” An earlier line of the *Golden Verses* (17) refers explicitly to luck, commanding that human beings should bear and not complain about whatever pains they have through “luck sent from the gods” (δαιμονίαισι τύχαις). This view is a bit difficult to square with Iamblichus' interpretation of verse 54, since it appears that we are not responsible for our own luck after all. We might argue that since,

according to verse 17, the key is our response to bad luck sent from the gods, even if the bad luck comes from the god we make our own luck and fortune by our response to what is sent by the gods. Whether these two aspects of the *Golden Verses* are compatible or not, neither shows any connection to the *Precepts* which, contra verse 54, clearly take the position that external forces can thwart our best efforts and, contra verses 17–18, say nothing about bearing and not complaining about our luck. In the *Theology of Arithmetic*, which is preserved among the works of Iamblichus but is generally taken to be by an unknown compiler (O'Meara 1989: 15; for a different view see Dillon 1973: 20–1), who relied mainly on excerpts from Anatolius (*On the Decad*) and Nicomachus (*Theology of Arithmetic*), the number seven is called chance (τύχη) because like chance it controls all things (71.12–13 De Falco 1922, evidently in an excerpt from Nicomachus). There is nothing of this in the *Precepts*, where it is clear that chance does not control everything.

Apart from these passages in Iamblichus and the *Golden Verses* the only other place in the Pythagorean tradition where luck is an important concept is the pseudo-Pythagorean writings. Immediately following his quotation of fragment 7 from the *Pythagorean Precepts*, Stobaeus quotes an excerpt from Eurysus, *On Luck* (περὶ τύχης), in the Doric dialect typical of the pseudo-Pythagorean writings. It seems likely that Eurysus is a slip here for Eurytus, who was a famous Pythagorean of the late fifth century and is likely to have been a pupil of Philolaus (Thesleff 1965: 87–8). The excerpt clearly belongs to the pseudo-Pythagorean tradition and cannot be assigned to the historical Eurytus. It puts forth a theory of two opposed principles, one of which is rational and ordered and the other of which is irrational and disordered, which is prominent in the pseudo-Pythagorean writings of the first century BC (Centrone 2014: 321–6). “Eurytus” asserts that luck is not a nature nor due to either human or divine art or thought. Instead, events involving chance and luck arise in the world when the irrational and disordered principle impinges upon it. The origins of these ideas are likely to be found in the errant cause of the *Timaeus* and there is no connection between the *On Luck* of pseudo-Eurytus and the *Pythagorean Precepts*, where there is no trace of such a theory of principles. It would thus appear that the doctrine of luck presented in the *Pythagorean Precepts* had little appeal in the later philosophical tradition and was largely ignored apart from

Stobaeus' decision to excerpt it. Its difference from what we find in the later tradition is a strong reason for regarding it as reflecting the actual views of Pythagoreans of the fourth century BC.

Detailed Commentary

Line 1 – **περί δέ**: Aristoxenus frequently uses this phrase plus the genitive to introduce a new section of the *Precepts*. See the discussion of the style of the *Precepts* in the Introduction.

Line 1 – **ἔφασκον**: The second hand in manuscript P reports the third person singular form of the verb rather than the third person plural. Given the great fame of Pythagoras in the later tradition it seems most likely that the tendency would be to ascribe things said by the Pythagoreans as a group to the master himself so that it is most likely that the plural form is the original. See the discussion of style in the Introduction.

Lines 1–2 – **δαιμόνιον μέρος αὐτῆς**: The gods are constantly associated with luck in Greek literature. There are over twenty instances in Euripides alone. For example in *Medea* Aegeus says that he is childless “because of the luck sent by some divinity” (671 δαίμονός τινος τύχη). Similarly, fragment 37 asserts “that man is wise who bears most nobly the luck sent by the gods” (τὰς δὲ δαιμόνων τύχας). There are also many examples in prose, see, e.g., Demosthenes *De Corona* 208.

Line 2 – **ἐπίπνοιάν τινα παρὰ τοῦ δαιμονίου**: The word ἐπίπνοια, meaning “inspiration” (literally “breathing upon”), is not terribly common. There are about seventeen uses through the fourth century. It appears first in Aeschylus, nine times in Plato and only once in Aristotle. This is the earliest use of the word with the preposition παρὰ, and there are only a handful of examples of this use in the later tradition (e.g., Dio Chrys. 1.57.2). The typical usage is simply to have a genitive indicating the source of the inspiration (ἐξ ἐπιπνοίας Διός – Aesch. *Supp.* 17–18), but the pseudo-Platonic *On Virtue* uses a variant with the preposition ἐκ (ἐπιπνοίᾳ ἐκ τῶν θεῶν – 379c6) and Aristoxenus' use of παρὰ is a similar variation in expression. The usage of ἐπίπνοια here in Aristoxenus is slightly unusual in that the word elsewhere usually refers to inspiration that is for the good whereas here the inspiration can also lead to what is bad.

Line 3 – **ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον ἢ ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον**: Parallels for this pairing are seen in Isocrates (7.5.4) and Aristotle (*Metaph.* 1019b3) among others.

Lines 3–4 – **καὶ εἶναι φανερώς κατ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο τοὺς μὲν εὐτυχεῖς τοὺς δὲ ἀτυχεῖς**: I cannot find a good parallel for the use of the adverb φανερώς with the

verb “to be” where the meaning is “it is clear(ly),” which is the sense called for here. On the other hand Aristoxenus uses the expression εἶναι φανερόν ten times in the *Elements of Harmonics* with the meaning “it is clear” (e.g., 30.13). In all of these instances εἶναι φανερόν is followed by ὅτι. In this case then, it seems possible that φανερόν ὅτι was misread by a scribe as φανερώς. After this mistake was made the nominatives that appeared in the ὅτι clause could have been changed by that scribe or someone later in the tradition to the accusatives to match the indirect statement of the rest of the passage. The correct text may thus have been καὶ εἶναι φανερόν ὅτι κατ’ αὐτὸ τοῦτο οἱ μὲν εὐτυχεῖς οἱ δὲ ἀτυχεῖς.

Line 9 – εὐφυεῖς . . . ἀφυεῖς: This contrast is found in both Plato and Aristotle. At *Resp.* 455b5 Plato says that the difference between one gifted by nature (τὸν μὲν εὐφυῆ) and one not gifted (τὸν δὲ ἀφυῆ) is that the one learns easily and the other not. Aristotle says that men are gifted and not gifted (εὐφυεῖς καὶ ἀφυεῖς) in intelligence in proportion to the quality of their sense of touch (*de An.* 421a24).

Line 9 – εὔστοχοι: LSJ gives the translations “aiming well” and “making good shots.” The adverb is more common than the noun and appears in line 12 below. The word is relatively common in the fifth and fourth centuries. Aristotle uses this adjective to describe a person who is “shrewd” or “has a good eye” for seeing the similarity in things that differ widely in other ways (*Rh.* 1412a13).

Line 9 – ἐναντίαν ἔχοντες φύσιν: While it is true that there is no word δύστοχος to serve as the opposite of εὔστοχος, there is a word that serves as its opposite, i.e. ἄστοχος, which is used once by Plato (*Ti.* 19e5) and once by Aristotle (*HA* 587a9) so that it is a little puzzling why Aristoxenus chose to use the periphrasis “having an opposite nature” rather than just using ἄστοχος (“failing to hit the mark”). However, there are only three uses of the word before Aristoxenus (one in a fragment of Aeschylus in addition to the passages in Plato and Aristotle mentioned above), so that Aristoxenus may not have been aware of or may have simply chosen not to use a relatively rare word.

Line 10 – βλάστοιεν: This is the reading of Wyttenbach (1795–1830). The verb is more common in forms deriving from βλαστάνω, but forms deriving from βλαστέω such as this one used by Aristoxenus are common in Aristoxenus’ near contemporary Theophrastus.

Line 10 – εὐθύβολοιεν: The verb means “to go straight” and thus usually has the connotation of hitting the mark (thus sperm that is shot straight hits the right part of the womb for conception [Sext. Emp. *Math.* 5.58.4]) and sometimes means just “to hit the mark” (of a correct prophecy [Philo *Moses* 2.265.3]), as it does here. The verb is much more rare than the corresponding adjective. Philo uses the adjective of names that “hit the mark” by being particularly apt (Philo

On Husbandry 2.2). This use of the adjective to describe fitting names is by far the most common use in Philo, who is the author who uses the adjective most frequently (50 out of some 200 total uses).

The manuscripts have εὐθύβουλοι εἶεν (F) and εὐθύβουλοι εἶναι (P). However, since the stem εὐθυβουλ- appears nowhere else in Greek, the stem should be corrected to the normal εὐθυβολ- (see LSJ). Jacobs, however, went further and corrected from the adjective form plus the optative of the verb “to be” (εὐθύβουλοι εἶεν) suggested by the manuscripts to the verb form εὐθυβολοῖεν. He presumably did so for stylistic reasons, since this produces a parallel construction: οἱ μὲν with an optative verb form (οἱ μὲν εὐθυβολοῖεν) followed by οἱ δέ with an optative verb form (οἱ δέ ἀποπίπτοιν), whereas the manuscript reading οἱ μὲν εὐθύβουλοι εἶεν would naturally lead to οἱ δέ with an adjective. The use of either the verb or the adjective is somewhat surprising in that the adjective does not appear elsewhere until Philo (first century BC) and with one exception the verb also does not appear before Philo. There are several uses of the verb in the testimonia for Diocles of Carystus and, while some of these belong to the author quoting them, in one case there is at least the suggestion that the verb may go back to Diocles (fr. 43b, line 9). Diocles’ dates are controversial. Jaeger (1938) suggested 340–260 BC, whereas von Staden has argued that he belongs to the fourth century and was a contemporary of Aristotle (1989: 46). In either case Diocles would provide a roughly contemporary parallel for Aristoxenus’ usage. If Diocles did not use the word himself then Aristoxenus’ usage would be the earliest occurrence by several centuries.

Line 10 – ἐφ’ ὃ τι ἂν ἐπιβάλωνται: ἐπιβάλλω is a common verb in all periods. In the middle it means literally “throw oneself upon.” With the genitive it can mean to aim at (Arist. *Pol.* 1258a3), while with the accusative it often means “to apply oneself to” or “to attempt” (e.g., Pl. *Ti.* 48c). So the translation here is “to whatever they apply themselves” or “in whatever they undertake.”

Lines 10–11 – οἱ δέ ἀποπίπτοιν τοῦ σκοποῦ: In earlier Greek texts ἀποπίπτω refers to something or someone literally “falling off” of something. It appears particularly in the Hippocratic corpus in describing body parts falling off (alarmingly!) and in both the zoological works of Aristotle and the botanical works of Theophrastus (e.g., of fruit falling off a tree, *De causis plantarum* 2.1.7.4). However, here in Aristoxenus it is used metaphorically of someone failing to attain something, with the thing in question being put in the genitive. This usage is not found elsewhere before Polybius in the second century, where it is fairly common. Polybius uses it of someone who has failed in an attempt (2.53.6.4) or has been disappointed in an expectation (16.1.8.1), so here in Aristoxenus some people fail to obtain their object or goal.

Line 12 – **εὐστόχως φερομένης**: See the comments on εὐστοχοί in line 9. The adverb appears twice in Aristotle and once in Plato.

Line 12 – **ἀεὶ παρασσομένης**: This is Wachsmuth's emendation (Wachsmuth and Hense 1884–1912) for the manuscript reading καὶ παρασσομένης. All editors have rejected the manuscript reading because of the difficulty in explaining the force of καὶ. After the strong assertion that “their thought is never borne towards the target” it is hopelessly bathetic to add “but is also/even confused.” Some emendations suppose that another participle has fallen out which was joined to παρασσομένης by καὶ (φυρομένης Hense, παραλλαττούσης Kranz). This gets rid of the objectionable use of καὶ and strengthens the second clause by adding a second adjective so that there is a better rhetorical balance with the first part of the sentence “their thought is never borne towards the target but is jumbled (Hense) and confused.” Kranz's suggestion works less well since παραλλαττούσης creates too much repetition with the first part of the sentence: “their thought is never borne towards the target but misses the target and is confused.” The other approach is to suppose that καὶ is a corruption of a short word and thus Wachsmuth suggests ἀεὶ, while Meineke thought of δια- as a prefix to the verb. This approach is better. Since there is no direct evidence as to what the missing participle was, which one we choose will always remain somewhat arbitrary (Kranz' reference to Pl. *Tht.* 194a only shows that παραλάττω could have been used in this context, not that it was). Meineke's suggestion “but is very confused” works but Wachsmuth's suggestion is best because ἀεὶ makes a forceful contrast with μηδέποτε in the preceding clause: “since their thought is never borne towards the target but is always confused.” A parallel for this combination of μηδέποτε and ἀεὶ is found in Plato (*Ph.* 83d9): a soul corrupted by pleasure “never (μηδέποτε) arrives in Hades in purity but always (ἀλλὰ ἀεὶ) leaves (this world) contaminated by the body.”

Line 13 – **ἀτυχίαν**: This word meaning “misfortune” is particularly common in the tetralogies of Antiphon and indeed in other orators such as Isocrates and Demosthenes. This is, of course, not at all surprising, since court trials focus on misfortunes. In the second tetralogy a boy runs in front of the throw of a javelin and is killed. In the speech this is described as a misfortune, an ἀτυχία, and two possibilities are envisaged at 3.8.3, either it was due to some god or it was a pure error. The first of these two possibilities seems similar to what Aristoxenus calls the divine part of luck, which is brought about by a divinity, but the second, the case of pure error, does not fit the second type of luck in the *Precepts*, which has to do with someone's natural propensity.

Line 13 – **σύμφυτον . . . καὶ οὐκ ἐπείσακτον**: These adjectives are not applied to τύχη or ἀτυχία elsewhere, either singly or as a pair, so this terminology

concerning luck is unique to the Pythagoreans. The distinction between what is natural or inborn and what is introduced from outside is found in a number of other texts but in only two passages is it expressed using these two adjectives. Thus in *Parts of Animals* (659b17), Aristotle refers to a pneuma that belongs to certain animals by nature (τῷ συμφύτῳ πνεύματι) and that is not introduced from without (οὐ θύραθεν ἐπείσακτόν ἐστιν). See also Simplicius *In Phys.* 9.625.15. It is thus clear that this pair of adjectives is not a technical usage of any philosophical school either before or after Aristoxenus, whether applied to luck or any other subject. The adjective ἐπείσακτος does appear in a wide range of Greek authors to identify something that is brought in from outside rather than being natural or inborn. Thus in Euripides (*Ion* 590) the Athenians are identified as autochthonous rather than being a people who were brought into the country from outside (ἐπείσακτον γένος). It is interesting that the Pythagorean Philolaus describes the first breath of a new-born baby as cooling and “brought in from outside” in contrast with the natural heat of the body, as part of his argument that the body is constituted out of the hot (A27 – see Huffman 1993: 293–301). Philolaus does not, however, use the adjective σύμφυτος or any other word with the root φυ- to describe our innate heat.

19 | Fragment 8: Human Nature is Prone to Excess and Needs the Supervision of the Gods, Parents, and Laws (33 W)

Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* 174–6. For lines 20–27 cf. Stobaeus 4.25.45 and 4.1.49 (= *Precepts* frs. 1 and 2).

ἔτι τοίνυν ἀνυσιμώτατον πρὸς τὴν τῆς δικαιοσύνης κατάστασιν 1
ὑπελάμβανεν εἶναι τὴν τῶν θεῶν ἀρχήν, ἄνωθέν τε ἀπ’ ἐκείνης 2
πολιτεῖαν καὶ νόμους, δικαιοσύνην τε καὶ τὰ δίκαια διέθηκεν. οὐ 3
χεῖρον δὲ καὶ τὰ καθ’ ἕκαστον ὅπως διώρισε προσθεῖναι. 4
5
τὸ διανοεῖσθαι περὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, ὥς ἔστι τε καὶ πρὸς τὸ 6
ἀνθρώπινον γένος οὕτως ἔχει ὥς ἐπιβλέπειν καὶ μὴ ὀλιγωρεῖν 7
αὐτοῦ, χρήσιμον εἶναι ὑπελάμβανον [οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι παρ’ 8
ἐκείνου μαθόντες.] δεῖσθαι γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἐπιστατείας τοιαύτης, ἥ 9
κατὰ μηδὲν ἀνταίρειν ἀξιώσομεν· τοιαύτην δ’ εἶναι τὴν ὑπὸ τοῦ 10
θεοῦ γινομένην, εἴπερ ἔστι τὸ θεῖον τοιοῦτον <οῖον> ἄξιον εἶναι 11
τῆς τοῦ σύμπαντος ἀρχῆς. ὑβριστικὸν γὰρ δὴ φύσει τὸ ζῶον 12
ἔφασαν εἶναι, [ὀρθῶς λέγοντες,] καὶ ποικίλον κατὰ τε τὰς ὁρμὰς 13
καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας καὶ κατὰ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν παθῶν· δεῖσθαι 14
οὖν τοιαύτης ὑπεροχῆς τε καὶ ἐπανατάσεως (175), ἀφ’ ἧς ἔστι 15
σωφρονισμός τις καὶ τάξις. ὦντο δὴ δεῖν ἕκαστον αὐτῷ 16
συνειδότα τὴν τῆς φύσεως ποικιλίαν μηδέποτε λήθην ἔχειν τῆς 17
πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ὁσιότητός τε καὶ θεραπειας, ἀλλ’ αἰετὶ τίθεσθαι πρὸ 18
τῆς διανοίας ὥς ἐπιβλέποντός τε καὶ παραφυλάττοντος τὴν 19
ἀνθρωπίνην ἀγωγὴν. **μετὰ δὲ τὸ θεῖον τε καὶ τὸ δαιμόνιον** 20
πλεῖστον ποιεῖσθαι λόγον γονέων τε καὶ νόμου [καὶ τούτων 21
ὑπήκοον αὐτὸν κατασκευάζειν], **μὴ πλαστῶς, ἀλλὰ** 22
πεπεισμένως. [καθόλου δὲ ὦντο δεῖν ὑπολαμβάνειν μηδὲν 23
εἶναι μεῖζον κακὸν ἀναρχίας· οὐ γὰρ πεφυκέναι τὸν 24
ἄνθρωπον διασώζεσθαι μηδενὸς ἐπιστατοῦντος.] (176) τὸ 25
μένειν ἐν τοῖς πατρίοις ἔθεσί τε καὶ νομίμοις ἐδοκίμαζον [οἱ 26
ἄνδρες ἐκεῖνοι], **κἂν ἢ μικρῷ χεῖρω ἐτέρων·** τὸ γὰρ ῥαδίως 27

ἀποπηδᾶν ἀπὸ τῶν ὑπαρχόντων νόμων καὶ οἰκείους εἶναι	28
καινοτομίας οὐδαμῶς εἶναι σύμφορον οὐδὲ σωτήριον.	29
	30
πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἄλλα τῆς πρὸς θεοὺς ὁσίας ἐχόμενα ἔργα	31
διεπράξατο, σύμφωνον ἑαυτοῦ τὸν βίον τοῖς λόγοις	32
ἐπιδεικνύων· οὐ χεῖρον δ' ἐνὸς μνημονεῦσαι, δυναμένου καὶ τὰ	33
ἄλλα σαφῶς ἐμφαίνειν . . .	34

11 <οἶον>] Nauck **16** αὐτῶ] Rohde αὐτῶν **F 20–27** μετὰ . . .
 ἐτέρων cf. Stob. 4.25.45 = *Precepts* fr. 1 **20** μετὰ] καὶ μετὰ Stob.
 A δέ] om. Stob. τε] om. Stob. **21** λόγον γονέων] Iambl., Stob.
 M A² Tr. λόγον νέων Stob. S A¹ νόμου] Iambl. νόμων Stob. post
 νόμου] καὶ τούτων ὑπήκοον αὐτὸν κατασκευάζειν om. Stob. **23**
 πεπεισμένως] Iambl. πεπιστευμένως Stob. post πεπεισμένως]
 ἑαυτὸν πρὸς ταῦτα παρασκευάζοντα Stob. post πεπεισμένως]
 καθόλου δὲ ᾧοντο δεῖν ὑπολαμβάνειν μηδὲν εἶναι μείζον κακὸν
 ἀναρχίας· οὐ γὰρ πεφυκέναι τὸν ἄνθρωπον διασφύζεσθαι μηδενὸς
 ἐπιστατοῦντος (= Stob. 4.1.49 = *Precepts* fr. 2 lines 1–3) Iambl. **26**
 μένειν ἐν] Iambl. μένειν Stob. SMA ἐμμένειν Gesn.¹ <δ' ἐμμένειν
 Elter πατρίοις] πατρώοις Stob. A νομίμοις] Iambl. νόμοις
 Stob. post ἔδοκίμαζον] οἱ ἄνδρες ἐκεῖνοι om. Stob. **27** κἂν ἥ]
 Iambl. εἰ καὶ Stob. μικρῶ] Iambl., Stob. μακρῶ Deubner cf.
 Diodorus 12.16.3 χεῖρῳ] Iambl., Stob. S M χείρων Stob. A post
 ἐτέρων] εἴη Stob

Translation

Furthermore, he supposed that the rule of the gods was most efficacious for establishing justice and, on the basis of that rule on high, he determined the constitution, laws, justice and just acts. It is not a bad idea also to add what distinctions he made about individual cases.

[The Pythagoreans, having learned it from him,] supposed that it was useful to regard the divine as existing and so disposed towards the human race as to oversee it and not to neglect it. For we are in need of the sort of supervision against which we will not dare to rebel in any way. Such is the supervision that is brought into being by the divine, if the divine is such as to be worthy to rule the whole. For they said [, and they are right to say so,] that an animal is by nature insolent and excessive and shows a complex variety in its impulses, desires, and the rest of its emotions. Therefore it is

in need of the sort of superior authority and threats from which self-control and order arise. They thought it necessary for each person to be conscious of the complex variety of his nature and to never forget piety and service towards the divine but always to keep in the front of his thoughts that it pays attention to and closely watches human conduct. **But [cf. fr. 1] after both what belongs to gods and also the divine to pay most attention to parents and laws [and make oneself subject to these], not in a counterfeit way but out of conviction. [As a general rule they thought it necessary to suppose that there is no greater evil than anarchy, for it is not natural for human beings to be saved, if there is no one supervising them (cf. fr. 2, lines 1–3)]. [Those men] approved abiding by the customs and laws of their fathers, even if they should be somewhat worse than those of others.** For to easily turn away from the existing laws and to become at home with innovation is in no way advantageous or salutary.

Accordingly he accomplished many other deeds that followed closely on his piety to the gods, demonstrating that his way of life was in harmony with his words. It is not a bad idea to mention one of them, which is also able to illustrate the rest clearly . . .

Extent of the Fragment

The great majority of scholars have regarded these sections of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, apart from Iamblichus' opening and closing remarks (lines 1–4 and 31–4), as derived from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Rohde (1871–2 = 1901: 158) argued for this view on two grounds: 1) these sections report what the Pythagoreans as a group rather than Pythagoras himself believed, which is typical of the *Precepts* but not of Iamblichus, and 2) three sentences towards the end (printed in bold in the text above) overlap with fragments of the *Pythagorean Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus (4.25.45 and 4.1.49 = frs. 1 and 2). Dillon and Hershbell say that Rohde's claim has "great probability" and note that the style in sections 174–6 "is not Iamblichean" (1991: 187, n. 10). Wehrli, whose collection of the fragments of the *Precepts* primarily consists of the excerpts in Stobaeus, prints these sections of Iamblichus as fragment 33, one of only two sections from Iamblichus that he accepts as representing the *Precepts* (1967: 17–18). DK prints them as coming from the *Precepts* but is not careful as to what belongs to Iamblichus'

introduction and what belongs to the *Precepts* proper (1.468.38–469.19). Burkert too regards these sections as from Aristoxenus (1972: 101, n. 17). Staab, on the other hand, is overly cautious in regarding only the material that is explicitly paralleled in Stobaeus as coming from the *Precepts* (2002: 385, n. 945).

My more detailed analysis of the style of the *Pythagorean Precepts* strengthens the argument that most parts of sections 174–6 are indeed derived from Aristoxenus. It is logical to start the examination of the passage with the three sentences that are confirmed to be from the *Precepts* by the parallel with material preserved in Stobaeus (4.25.45 and 4.1.49 = frs. 1 and 2). The sentence from Stobaeus 4.1.49 (= fr. 2) must have been inserted here by Iamblichus or his source, since Stobaeus preserves several sentences after it, which do not appear in this section of Iamblichus. As an excerptor Stobaeus is unlikely to have combined sentences from different parts of Aristoxenus' book to form fragment 2, whereas it is typical of Iamblichus and his source to combine materials from different sources. On the other hand, the two sentence excerpt cited by Stobaeus at 4.25.45 (fr. 1) could well belong in this broader context in Aristoxenus preserved by Iamblichus, and it makes sense to work out from these secure bits of Aristoxenus to examine the rest of the material preserved by Iamblichus. The first sentence of 4.25.45 begins with the observation that “But after both what belongs to the gods and also the divine [they thought it necessary] to pay most attention to parents and the laws.” These words suggest that Aristoxenus has just discussed the divine and is now going on to parents. What precedes in Iamblichus is precisely a discussion of the proper attitude to the divine, which fits seamlessly with the material on respect for parents. Moreover, the first sentence needs some phrase such as “they thought it necessary” to govern it and the preceding sentence in Iamblichus has just this phrase (ᾧοντο δὲ δεῖν). Thus, the continuity of the passages provides good reason to believe that the material in Iamblichus leading up to the first sentence paralleled by Stobaeus also comes from Aristoxenus. Where does the quotation from Aristoxenus begin in Iamblichus? Considerations of both content and structure point clearly to the third sentence of section 174 (τὸ διανοεῖσθαι). This is both where the discussion of the proper attitude to the divine begins and also where the text of Iamblichus shifts from using singular verbs with Pythagoras as the subject to using plural verbs with the Pythagoreans as the subject.

The whole passage from τὸ διανοεῖσθαι to the first sentence paralleled by Stobaeus 4.25.45 (fr. 1) fits the style of the *Pythagorean Precepts* very closely. Indeed, even if we did not have the material preserved in Stobaeus to assure us that some of what follows is from Aristoxenus, the criteria developed for identifying passages of the *Precepts* would indicate that this passage was from Aristoxenus' work. In addition to the typical use of plurals, which Rohde pointed out, all of the main verbs in the passage are verbs of saying and thinking in the imperfect and introduce indirect statement (ὑπελάμβανον, ἔφασαν, ᾤοντο). The first and third verbs are explicitly paralleled in the fragments of the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus (both in fr. 2). Further, the passage has the prescriptive tone of the *Precepts* throughout, as is most explicitly seen in the expression "they thought that it was necessary" (ᾤοντο δὲ δεῖν – cf. fr. 2 where ᾤοντο δεῖν appears). General prescriptions are supported by explanatory γάρ clauses as in the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus (e.g., frs. 2 and 4). Moreover, it is very clear where the join between the material written by Iamblichus and the material derived from Aristoxenus appears. In line 8, "the Pythagoreans" serves as the subject for the first plural verb of thinking, "supposed" (ὑπελάμβανον). Although the Pythagoreans are the assumed subject of the plural verbs in the fragments of the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus, they are never explicitly named, so that the natural suspicion is that Iamblichus has inserted the explicit subject here. This suspicion is confirmed by the circumstantial participle that modifies "the Pythagoreans" here, "having learned from him," since it is designed to connect Iamblichus' introductory material, which talks in terms of Pythagoras (lines 1–4), to the following material, which talks in terms of the Pythagoreans. Iamblichus is claiming that the following practices, which are assigned to the Pythagoreans in the plural, can be assigned to Pythagoras himself, because they learned them from him. Iamblichus uses exactly the same connecting device at the beginning of section 96 to connect his presentation using singulars to an excerpt from another work of Aristoxenus (*On the Pythagorean Way of Life*), which uses plurals (See [Appendix 1](#)).

If the material deriving from Aristoxenus begins in line 6, where does it end? The first sentence (lines 27–9) following the material paralleled in Stobaeus 4.25.45 (fr. 1) is very likely to also be from the *Precepts*, since it continues in indirect statement and, in the typical style of the *Precepts*, uses a γάρ to provide an explanation for the precept in the preceding

sentence: “They approved of abiding by the customs and laws of their fathers, even if they should be somewhat worse than those of others. *For* to easily turn away from the existing laws and to become at home with innovation is in no way advantageous or salutary.” The concept of “safety” here also has parallels with the first sentence of fragment 2 of the *Precepts*, which Iamblichus inserted into the midst of this fragment. The quotation from Aristoxenus ends with this explanatory sentence, however, since the next sentence (lines 31–3) is clearly Iamblichus’ own, because the verb switches back to the singular with Pythagoras as the subject.

The language of these sections of Iamblichus *VP* 174–6 is also consistent with their being derived from Aristoxenus. Most of the vocabulary and usage can be paralleled in the fourth and fifth centuries BC with only three unusual words. One of these, in fact, turns out on further study to be strong support for Aristoxenus’ authorship of the passage (see the detailed commentary on ἐπιστατεία below) and the same may be true of a second (see the commentary on σωφρονισμός). The third (ἐπανατάσσεως) is not paralleled with this meaning in early texts, but the actual word is used with another meaning by Aristotle and, given that there are no other suspicious features, is not enough to call the fragment into question (see the detailed commentary). There are also only a few signs of Iamblichus’ typical style of expansive rewriting within these passages. The only clear examples are the insertion of the phrase “and they are right to say so” (ὁρθῶς λέγοντες – line 13), which is unparalleled in the fragments of the *Precepts* and surely an editorial comment by Iamblichus, and the description of “the Pythagoreans” in lines 8–9 as “having learned it from him,” which is discussed above. In the Introduction, I have shown that Iamblichus intervened in the text of Aristoxenus by inserting a sentence from fragment 2. Comparison with Stobaeus 4.25.45 (fr. 1) shows that he replaced a four-word participial phrase (ἐαυτὸν πρὸς ταῦτα παρασκευάζοντα, “conforming oneself to these”) with a five-word phrase of his own (καὶ τούτων ὑπήκοον αὐτὸν κατασκευάζειν, “and make oneself subject to these”) in the first sentence paralleled in Stobaeus, and added three words (οἱ ἄνδρες ἐκεῖνοι, “those men”) to serve as an explicit subject for the verb in the second. The single sentence following the material paralleled in Stobaeus does not provide much scope for such changes, but it is possible that Iamblichus has done similar things in the passage leading up to what is paralleled in those

fragments. There are no obvious additions, however, and Iamblichus' practice elsewhere suggests that any changes he made would not radically affect the meaning.

Overview of the Argument

At first sight the fragment appears to be about the divine, but closer examination reveals that the central focus is, in fact, on human nature. The basic principle governing the argument is that a living being is by nature ὑβριστικός and that it is also ποικίλος in its impulses and desires. Each of these Greek words is complex and will require further comment. First, it is important to note that, although the fragment will go on to talk of specifically human nature (τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ἀγωγὴν – lines 19–20, τὸν ἀνθρώπον – line 25), this basic principle is stated in more general terms as what is characteristic of any animal (τὸ ζῶον – line 12), thus perhaps emphasizing humanity's connection to other animals.

ὑβρις is one of the more difficult Greek concepts to express in English. Its “core is the idea of an assault on status” (Fisher 1995: 45). Aristotle carefully defines it as harming another so that they are dishonored and emphasizes that dishonor is characteristic of it (*Rhet.* 1378b22–30). He also stresses that the one who harms does not do so for any gain but rather for a certain pleasure, the pleasure of showing superiority (ὑπερέχειν) over others. In some places Aristotle pairs ὑβρις with πλεονεκτεῖν (*Pol.* 1307a20), “to take more than one's fair share.” This brings out the excessive nature of ὑβρις. The hubristic man takes more than his proper share of honor just as some take more than their fair share of material goods. In Greek texts it is typically the young and the wealthy that display ὑβρις (Arist. *Rhet.* 1378b28). In Plato, the emphasis on excess in ὑβρις leads it to become the opposite of σωφροσύνη (self-control). This is particularly clear in the *Phaedrus* where Plato identifies two ruling principles in human beings: the one that leads to the best through reason is called self-control, while the other that drags us irrationally towards pleasures is called ὑβρις (237e–238a). It receives many different names depending on which desire overpowers reason, so that, if the desire for food prevails, it is called gluttony. Thus, ὑβρις is being identified with the appetitive part of the soul, which becomes clear later in the

dialogue, when, in the comparison of the soul to a chariot, the unruly horse is called the hubristic horse (254e).

Fragment 8 shows connections both to the Platonic emphasis on excess and the Aristotelian emphasis on an assault on status. The fragment asserts that, if the hubristic nature of the creature is properly checked, σωφρονισμός τις arises, so it is clear that the Pythagoreans agreed with Plato that ὕβρις was the opposite of self-control (σωφροσύνη). On the other hand, this self-control is established by the imposition of appropriate superior authority (ὑπεροχῆς – line 15) over human beings, the superiority of the gods, so that recognition of the true status of the human being is central for the Pythagoreans. Thus, in calling the living being ὑβριστικόν, the Pythagoreans emphasize that a living being is such as not to recognize any restraints on its actions, and in particular not to grant the appropriate status to others, whether they be humans or gods. The English word “insolent” captures much of this meaning but does not stress the excess involved in the Greek concept. Accordingly it is best to translate ὑβριστικόν with two adjectives, “insolent and excessive.”

Fragment 8 is distinctive and remarkable in its assertion that living beings in general and human beings in particular are by nature disposed to excess and a failure to grant appropriate status to others. Other Greek authors identify specific groups of people as hubristic but not the human race as a whole. Thus, in Herodotus, Croesus tells Cyrus that the Persians are hubristic by nature (1.89), but makes no such assertion about humanity as a whole. This is part of Herodotus’ and the Greeks’ tendency to see the Persian attack on Greece as an act of hubris (Fisher 1995: 67). Thucydides recognizes that, when power becomes great or prosperity arises unexpectedly and suddenly, hubris is likely to arise (3.39.4, 4.18.2), but again stops short of saying that humans are by nature hubristic. Plato comes the closest to the Pythagorean assertion in his claims that children are most hubristic (*Leg.* 808d) and that anyone who is given absolute power will become hubristic (*Leg.* 713c). These claims suggest that there is a basic hubristic nature that has to be checked early or it will be revealed in certain circumstances. On the other hand, Platonic psychology as portrayed in the *Phaedrus* shows that the hubristic element is only one part of the human being and that there are other parts that can rule it. The Pythagorean view is altogether bleaker. There is no suggestion that on its own the human creature will be anything

other than hubristic. In order to keep it in line superior authority and threats have to be established over it, in the first case in the form of the gods and then in the form of parents and the laws.

Fragment 8 says that human beings are not just hubristic by nature but also ποικίλος. The primary emphasis of this latter term is on complexity and variety. It can, in some contexts have a positive connotation of something that is beautiful because of the variety of its colors or the intricacy of its craftsmanship, but in other contexts it has the negative connotation of something that is chaotic in its variety, variability and complexity (for a more detailed discussion see the commentary on line 13). Since it is paired with ὑβριστικός, there can be little doubt that these negative connotations are at the fore in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. For, just as the hubristic nature of human beings is contrasted with the self-control that is desirable, so the complexity and variety of human emotions is contrasted with the order (τάξις – line 16) that needs to be established. The point is that a living being has a bewildering variety of constantly changing urges and emotions, in which it is hard to establish any order. So human beings are by nature both excessive in their claims for superiority over others and also subject to a chaotic variety of desires.

This negative view of human nature and of what is manifold seems to have been part of Pythagoreanism from early on, since it can be found in the *acusmata* and Aristotle's account of fifth-century Pythagoreanism as well. Indeed, the assertion about human nature in fragment 8 can be understood as a later reformulation of the Pythagorean *acusma* that says, "What is said most truly? That human beings are wicked" (Iambl. *VP* 82). In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle attests to Pythagorean discomfort with what is varied and complex (1106b7–35). In developing his own account of virtue as a mean state, Aristotle notes that error occurs in many ways whereas success is possible only in one way, i.e. the mean. Aristotle quotes an unattributed line of verse which says "Goodness is simple, badness manifold" (tr. Rackham, Loeb edition). The word for manifold here, παντοδαπῶς is closely connected to ποικίλος used in fragment 8, so that the verse expresses a view that is very close to that of fragment 8. Most importantly, however, Aristotle points out that, for the Pythagoreans who posited the table of opposites, evil belonged to the column of the unlimited, while good belonged to the column of the limited (1106b29–30, cf. *Metaph.* 986a22–6). There is no trace of this connection between evil and the unlimited in Philolaus, but clearly some

Pythagoreans of the fifth century did make this connection and it is thus not surprising to find Aristoxenus' fourth-century Pythagoreans taking the view that the unlimited in the form of the varied, complex and manifold is inherently bad.

Other authors agree that there is a principle of chaos in the human breast. Plato identifies the irrational part of the soul as ποικίλος and says that it is to this rather than the rational part that the poetic art is directed, because its variety makes it easier to imitate (*Resp.* 605a). Similarly the appetitive part of the soul is identified as a ποικίλος and many-headed beast, as opposed to the lion that represents the spirited part and the man that represents the rational part. Even before Plato, Democritus commented that if people should open themselves up "they would find a treasury and storeroom that was filled with a great variety (ποικίλον) of evils and many passions" (DK 68B149). Thus, the Pythagoreans are not unique in emphasizing the chaotic nature of human desires, but there is nothing in fragment 8 to suggest that it was derived from either Plato or Democritus. There is no trace of Plato's tripartite soul or of Democritus' image of the storeroom. What is distinctive about fragment 8 is its apparent contention that it is not just a part of the human soul that is subject to such confusion and chaos but that such is human nature as a whole. Fragment 8 does not present a battle of parts of the soul for control but assumes that the human animal is in its nature out of control.

This basic principle about the nature of living beings is then shown to have important consequences. If the basic nature of the creature leads it to act without restraint, it requires appropriate external authority and threats so that self-control and order can arise. The external authority must be of such superiority that we human animals will not dare to rebel against it in any way. If the authority is such that we think we can evade it, then it is not sufficient. The divine does have such authority and superiority, if it has the power to rule the whole universe. In order for this authority to have the desired effect we must assume not just that it exists but that it in fact pays attention to and closely watches over human conduct. The thought may be that, if the divine watches over the workings of the universe, then it would have no trouble watching over human beings. People then must become conscious of their changeable and varied natures in order to see their need for such an external authority, if they are to have any self-control and order in their lives.

This argument about the role of the divine in our lives is unusual in that it does not start from recognition of divine activity in the world. It starts from an examination of our own human nature. We must recognize that our nature is inherently prone to excess and chaotic and that our lives can only become self-controlled and ordered, if we acknowledge an authority of such overwhelming superiority that we cannot imagine ourselves escaping it. Such an authority would be a god who could rule over the whole cosmos, so if we are to live an ordered life, we must believe in such a god and that this god pays attention to our lives. The nature of the argument is particularly revealed in line 8 where it is asserted that it is “useful” (χρήσιμον) to regard the divine as existing and as so disposed to the human race as to oversee it and not neglect it. Religious belief is in the end justified by its usefulness in helping us to live a good life not because of any direct argument for the existence of the gods. One might argue that we are supposed to affirm the existence of the gods from the order we see in the cosmos but, although that argument is found in other authors, strictly speaking that is not the way the argument works here. There is, in fact, no mention of the order in the universe. The argument says that we need an authority against which we will not dare to rebel and that such authority belongs to the divine, if it is such as to be worthy of the rule of the universe. Thus it is not taken as fundamental that there is such a divine power ruling the universe but rather that we need to assume such a power, if our tendency to excess and to reject the status of others is to be controlled.

The need for order and control is so great that the fragment goes on to assert that after the gods and the divine we must also heed other authorities that are not as strong as the gods but that still provide curbs on our nature: our parents and the laws. It is emphasized that we should not merely pretend to show them respect but be convinced of the need to do so. It might seem unnecessary to appeal to other sources of authority, if the gods have the overwhelming supremacy that has been assigned to them. The thought may be, however, that, although the gods provide the kind of supremacy that parents and laws lack, the gods are not as tangible at every moment of our lives as parents and the laws are, so that obedience to them is used as a subsidiary means to instill the all-important order in our lives. This order is so important that, as is stated at the end of fragment 8, we should adhere to the laws of our community

even if they are somewhat worse than other laws. This emphasis on order even over correctness is defended on the grounds that easily turning away from existing laws and becoming used to innovation is not advantageous or salutary. Earlier scholars claimed that the preference for order over correctness was Platonic and that the presence of this preference in the *Pythagorean Precepts* was one of the signs that it was a fiction composed by Aristoxenus in order to show that the Pythagoreans had anticipated Plato. However, in [Chapter 9](#) of the Introduction I have shown that there is nothing particularly Platonic about the preference.

Three lines before the end of fragment 8, Iamblichus or his source felt the need to rearrange the text and insert two sentences from fragment 2 (lines 23–5), which is preserved by Stobaeus. Fragment 2 may have followed closely on the text of fragment 8 in the original *Precepts*, so that Iamblichus or his source was just modifying the order slightly, perhaps to shorten the length of the overall quotation. The basic principle in the first sentence inserted by Iamblichus is that “there is no greater evil than anarchy.” This conclusion agrees with the preceding discussion in fragment 8 about human nature and its inability to control itself and with the assumption now made explicit in the second sentence from fragment 2 that order is necessary for human beings. The Pythagoreans assert, “It is not natural for human beings to be saved, if there is no one overseeing them.” Fragment 8 similarly ends with the assertion that “to easily turn away from the existing laws . . . is in no way . . . salutary,” i.e. in no way such as to save us. It then becomes a very important question as to what is meant by being saved. Is it mere preservation of existence or is it existence of a certain sort? Since supervision and laws have been praised above for their ability to produce self-control and order in life, surely what is meant is that human beings are saved from the ruin of living a disordered life, which is controlled by their natural hubris and chaotic desires (see further the commentary on fr. 2, line 2).

If we return to the Pythagorean conception of the gods as it is expressed in fragment 8, it is clear that Minar is right that for the Pythagoreans “the gods are primarily stern judges” and that “there is no hint of a relation of love between god and man” (1942: 128 and 99). On the other hand, his assertion that “the exaltation of the law of ancestral tradition” is an expression of “divine right” is more questionable (1942: 100). Laws and tradition are praised in fragment 8 not because they come from the gods

but because they can serve the same function as the gods, that of controlling unruly human nature. It is unclear whether there is truth in Minar's argument that the Pythagoreans championed adherence to the laws in order to maintain the position of authority that they held in the south Italian states. This assumes that the precepts found in fragment 8 were developed in the late sixth or first half of the fifth century, when the Pythagoreans were in positions of authority. It is possible that this is true and that these precepts were still in force in the first half of the fourth century among the Pythagoreans that Aristoxenus encountered, but nothing about fragment 8 requires that these precepts were developed by Pythagoreans in power. They could just as well have been developed in Pythagorean communities in places like Phlius or Athens where Pythagoreans did not have political authority, since the focus of fragment 8 is not the state but the individual soul and its survival.

Another important question to ask about fragment 8 is what sort of a theory of the soul seems to be assumed in it. Minar argues that the fragment indicates that the Pythagoreans had developed a doctrine of the division of the soul into parts (1942: 123). This seems doubtful. It is true that living beings are said to be varied in their impulses, desires and emotions, but this variety could be perfectly well explained in terms of something like Plato's appetitive soul without appeal to any other sort of soul. Indeed, fragment 8 is notable for not referring to a battle between parts of the soul. It does not portray a rational or spirited part of the soul fighting with the appetites as in Plato. Instead the soul seems to be a unitary locus of impulses and desires, which has to be checked not by other parts of the soul but by external constraints. Thus, the fragment rather suggests a monolithic soul than one broken into parts.

Fragment 8 and Plato's *Laws* 10

Since fragment 8 sets out the central view of human nature on which the rest of the *Precepts* depends, it is crucial to examine its relationship to other Greek texts with which it has been thought to have close connections. These connections have led some scholars to question whether Aristoxenus was presenting a faithful account of fourth-century Pythagoreanism and to suggest that he was plagiarizing the

ideas of other thinkers, and of Plato in particular, in order to glorify the Pythagoreans. Brisson and Segonds follow Deubner (1975: 97–9) in noting parallels between aspects of the argument in fragment 8 and pseudo-Pythagorean texts by Zaleucus, Charondas and Hippodamus, and then comment that “the argument has little chance of being ancient,” regarding several passages as clear reminiscences of Book 10 of Plato's *Laws* (Brisson and Segonds 1996: 199). They do not make completely clear whether it is just the parallel passages from the pseudo-Pythagorean texts that they regard as derived from the *Laws* or whether this also applies to fragment 8 and, if so, whether it applies to all of the fragment or just part of it. Staab cites their comments approvingly and says that the passages in fragment 8 that agree with the pseudo-Pythagorean texts are ultimately derived from Plato's *Laws* (2002: 385). Staab does seem to agree that the material in fragment 8 that is paralleled by fragments 1 and 2 of Aristoxenus as preserved by Stobaeus is from Aristoxenus. It is not clear, however, whether he thinks that the material in Aristoxenus is also derived from the *Laws*, and hence that Aristoxenus is here plagiarizing Platonic ideas for the good of the Pythagoreans, or whether it is only the other material in VP 174–6, which is only found in Iamblichus, that has its origins in the *Laws*. Rivaud and Wehrli have also claimed that other aspects of fragment 8 are derived from other Platonic texts. In order to respond to these doubts about the genuine Pythagorean origin of fragment 8, it is necessary to examine the nature and significance of the connections first between fragment 8 and Plato, and then between fragment 8 and the pseudo-Pythagorean texts.

There are some clear similarities between the argument in fragment 8 and Book 10 of Plato's *Laws*, but those similarities are not such as to suggest that the material in fragment 8 was ultimately derived from the *Laws*. It is precisely the distinctive features of Plato's arguments that are missing in fragment 8, and it is better read as a different but related reaction to the same problem that Plato was addressing. Both fragment 8 and the *Laws* focus on the question of the relationship between belief in the gods and human morality. It is important to recognize that discussion of this issue was widespread in the late fifth and fourth centuries. Thus, in the *Busiris* (c. 390 BC), Isocrates praises the Egyptians for their piety and continues “those who produced this fear [of the gods] in us are responsible for our not being total savages to one another” (25). Sextus Empiricus (*Math.* 9.54), quotes lines from a play, which he assigns to the

sophist Critias (DK 88B25), but which many modern scholars think belong to Euripides' play *Sisyphus* (Kahn 1997). In these lines, human law succeeds in stopping deeds of open violence, but men still do such acts in secret. This problem of secret injustice is solved by "a shrewd and wise man who invented fear of the gods for mortals so that the wicked would have some fear even if they acted or spoke or thought in secret." A third passage presents the same view but formulates it in a way that is quite close to fragment 8 and *Laws* 10. Xenophon reports a conversation between Socrates and Aristodemus, in which Aristodemus takes the position that the gods exist (*Mem.* 1.4.10) but do not pay any attention to us. At the end of the passage, Xenophon comments that by such arguments for the existence and concern of the gods as he gave to Aristodemus Socrates kept his associates from impious, unjust and shameful acts both when they could be seen by others and when they were alone (*Mem.* 1.4.19).

Laws 10 and fragment 8 are both representatives of this widespread discourse, which considered the role of the gods in checking lawless behavior. It is in the formulation of the standard elements of this discourse that fragment 8 and *Laws* 10 are most similar. At the beginning of Book 10, Plato asserts that no one who believes in the gods as the laws prescribe has ever done an impious deed or uttered a lawless word (885b). This seems a doubtful proposition belied by experience, but for present purposes what is important is that Plato does assert that belief in the gods checks lawlessness. He then goes on to say that lawless behavior follows from one of three beliefs: 1) that the gods do not exist, 2) that they exist but have no care for men or 3) that they exist but are easily bribed by offerings or prayers to overlook our misdeeds (885b–c). The rest of Book 10 then consists of arguments against each of these three positions. The obvious similarity with fragment 8 is in this set-up. In both the *Laws* and fragment 8 it is clear that two central issues are whether the gods exist and, if they exist, whether they pay attention to human beings. Even in the basic statement of the issue there is a significant difference, however, in that Plato's third case – the possibility that the gods exist but can be bribed by offerings – appears nowhere in fragment 8. This omission in itself casts considerable doubt on whether fragment 8 could be directly based on *Laws* 10, since this is a prominent theme in Plato and a forger trying to claim Platonic ideas for the Pythagoreans would be unlikely to overlook it. Moreover, the language

used to set up even the two cases that are parallel is not as similar as we would expect, if fragment 8 were written in light of Book 10 of the *Laws*. For example, in fragment 8 the second case is made using the verbs ἐπιβλέπειν and ὀλιγωρεῖν whereas Plato does not use these verbs but repeatedly uses φροντίζειν (885b, 886e, 888c, 899d) or some form of ἐπιμελέομαι or ἀμελέω (900b, 905d).

If we go beyond the basic problem being discussed to look at Plato's response, there is very little similarity with fragment 8. None of the arguments that Plato develops against the three problematic attitudes towards the gods are paralleled in fragment 8. For example, he develops an elaborate argument for the existence of god based on the primacy of soul over body (see e.g., 896c). There is not a trace of this argument in fragment 8. On the other hand Plato does not develop the argument in the same way as fragment 8, where the emphasis is on the need for the overwhelming authority of the gods to check a human nature that is naturally insolent. Plato would undoubtedly agree with the general line of thought in fragment 8, but that line of thought bears none of the unique features of the argument of Book 10 of the *Laws*. Instead, both Plato and the Pythagoreans described by Aristoxenus in fragment 8 are developing related but distinct answers to a similar problem, which was much discussed in the fourth century as the passages discussed above show (i.e. the relation between belief in the divine and human behavior); it is the similarity of the problem which accounts for most of the similarity between *Laws* 10 and fragment 8 rather than the specifics of the solutions and there is no reason to believe that fragment 8 was derived from the *Laws*.

Rivaud and Wehrli have suggested that other features of fragment 8 are derived from Platonic texts, but these suggestions are no more convincing. According to Rivaud the idea in fragment 8 that humans are insolent and changeable by nature and in need of a pre-eminent authority and threats, against which they will not dare to rebel, is also derived from Plato by Aristoxenus. He cites a series of passages in Plato as parallels for the use of specific words in fragment 8 (e.g., insolence and insolent [ὑβρις, ὑβριστικός], variability and variable [ποικιλία, ποικίλος], pre-eminence [ὑπεροχή]). In the vast majority of these cases, however, all that Rivaud shows is that both Plato and Aristoxenus use a given word without even showing that they use it in a similar context, let alone in a noticeably similar way. For example Rivaud says that "Iamblichus uses

the terms *ὑπεροχή* and *ἐπανάστασις* which are both found in Plato” (1932: 785, n.3). There are several problems here. First, Rivaud seems to have misread the text, since Iamblichus uses not *ἐπανάστασις* (revolt) but *ἐπανάτασις* (threat – see the detailed commentary). Thus, his comments on *ἐπανάστασις* are irrelevant. Regarding *ὑπεροχή*, Rivaud cites *Laws* 711d, where Plato refers to “the pre-eminence of wealth.” This Platonic usage, however, has nothing to do with the pre-eminence of the gods in fragment 8, and there is no reason to believe that this passage of the *Laws* has any connection to fragment 8 on this basis. Rivaud similarly cites passages in Plato where the adjectives *ποικίλος* or *ὑβριστικός* are used but where there is nothing strikingly similar about Plato’s usage and fragment 8. Thus, at *Sophist* 226a the sophist is described as “many-sided” (*ποικίλον*) and at *Laws* 630b some mercenaries are called “insolent,” but these passages have little relevance to fragment 8, where sophists and mercenaries are not at issue but rather the nature of all human beings.

Only two of the passages cited by Rivaud have even superficial relevance to fragment 8. The first passage is *Republic* 588c. Plato here describes the appetitive part of the soul as “a manifold (*ποικίλου*) and many-headed beast” (tr. Shorey), while comparing the spirited part of the soul to a lion and the rational part to a man. This passage shows that Plato had the same reservations about what is varied and complex, as does Aristoxenus in fragment 8, but what is missing in fragment 8 is any trace of Plato’s tripartite soul, which would surely be present, if Rivaud were right that Aristoxenus is drawing on Plato to construct the *Pythagorean Precepts*. In fragment 8, it is not one part of the soul that is called manifold but the whole of human nature (*τὴν τῆς φύσεως ποικιλίαν* – line 17) and there is no trace of Plato’s lion or man as images of the other two parts of the soul. The second passage is *Laws* 808d. Here children are described as the most insolent of creatures (*ὑβριστότατον θηρίων*) and thus in need of a tutor, just as sheep need a shepherd or slaves a master. Plato agrees with fragment 8 in abhorring wanton behavior and wanting to check it by supervision, but this is not particularly remarkable, since surely many members of Greek society would agree; there is nothing unique in the agreement of this passage of the *Laws* with fragment 8. None of the specifics of the two passages are similar. Plato’s comments are limited to children, whereas fragment 8 claims that all human beings are insolent and in need of supervision.

Thus this passage gives us no reason to think that Aristoxenus wrote fragment 8 with this passage of the *Laws* in mind. Wehrli and Rivaud also try to argue that the injunction to honor our parents and the laws and not to change the laws in lines 20–27 of fragment 8 (= fr. 1) are derived from Plato but I have shown that they are mistaken in [Chapter 9](#) of the Introduction.

Fragment 8 and Book 10 of Plato’s *Laws* are similar in focusing on the same problem, the relationship between belief in the gods and morality, but they are no closer to one another than they are to a series of other fourth-century texts that deal with these same issues. Isocrates, Xenophon, Cleon and Archidamus in Thucydides, and Euripides/Critias all join the Pythagoreans of fragment 8 and Plato in the *Laws* in focusing on this same issue. Nothing suggests, however, that any of these texts are directly dependent on any of the others. They all provide their own unique perspective on the same issue.

Fragment 8 and “Zaleucus” and “Charondas”

Fragment 8 has also been thought to show similarities to four passages in what are generally regarded as pseudo-Pythagorean treatises and hence are to be found in Thesleff’s collection, *The Pythagorean Texts of the Hellenistic Period* (1965). Two are from the *Prelude to the Laws* of Zaleucus, which is preserved by Stobaeus. One is from the work *On the Republic* ascribed to Hippodamus, fragments of which are also preserved by Stobaeus. The fourth is from a passage describing the laws of Charondas in Diodorus Siculus. Similarities between fragment 8 and these spurious texts might suggest that fragment 8 was spurious as well, so these similarities must be examined carefully. Before discussing the specific connections between fragment 8 and these texts, it is crucial to examine carefully the general nature and status of these texts of Zaleucus, Charondas and Hippodamus. These texts provide an important contrast that helps in understanding the difference between pseudo-Pythagorean texts and the *Pythagorean Precepts*.

Zaleucus and Charondas can be conveniently treated together. The consensus of current scholarship is that both are historical figures, who should be dated to the seventh century BC. Zaleucus was the lawgiver for Epizephyrian Locri in southern Italy and Charondas the lawgiver for

Catana in Sicily, although their law codes are reported to have been adopted later by other Greek cities as well. Our earliest sources for these figures come from the fourth century BC and include Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes and the historian Ephorus (405–320). Zaleucus and Charondas are typically discussed with other early Greek lawgivers of the seventh and sixth centuries such as Lycurgus, Draco and Solon. Thus Plato presents Charondas as having played the same role in Sicily and Italy as Solon at Athens (*Resp.* 599e). Aristotle mentions a tradition according to which Zaleucus was the contemporary of the Spartan law-giver Lycurgus (*Pol.* 1274a22–31), both being pupils of the Cretan Thales (or Thaletas, seventh century), while Charondas was in turn the pupil of Zaleucus. Aristotle comments that those who say these things pay too little attention to chronology, but he does not say what precisely is wrong with it. Adcock suggested that it may be only the dating of Lycurgus that is problematic, since the rest of the relationships are compatible with the other evidence (1927: 101); Thaletas belongs to the early seventh century, Zaleucus, his pupil, to the mid seventh century and Charondas to the later part of the seventh century.

Ephorus reports that the Epizephyrian Locrians were the first people to have written laws (Strabo 6.1.8) and later identifies Zaleucus as the author of this legislation. If this is true, Zaleucus' legislation must date before Draco's written code in Athens (621 BC). Demosthenes, in his speech *Against Timocrates* (139–41), extols the stability of the law code of Locri. He does not mention Zaleucus by name but it is very likely that he is referring to his code. Demosthenes praises the code for lasting over two hundred years with only one change. It is not clear whether he means that at the time of the speech (353 BC) the code had only been changed once or whether it had been in existence for over two hundred years at the time of the first change, whenever that occurred. The former possibility would give the latest date for Zaleucus and would put him before 553 and probably back towards 600 BC. In the later tradition represented in Eusebius' chronicle, Locri was said to have been founded in 673 BC, and Zaleucus' legislation is dated to 661. Given the fourth-century evidence examined above, this date is perfectly possible. So, the evidence before 300 BC, while sketchy, provides a reasonably coherent picture of Zaleucus, and most scholars have concluded that he was active in the middle or second half of the seventh century before Draco (Adcock 1927: 101; Dunbabin 1968: 69; Graham 1982: 191; Gagarin 1986:

130, n. 27). The dating for Charondas is even less secure. The evidence discussed above suggests that he might have been Zaleucus’ pupil and hence a little later. Aristotle mentions him in the same breath with Solon and Lycurgus as coming from the middle class, as did all the best lawgivers (1296a21). Thus, a typical dating for Charondas is after 650 and perhaps closer to 600 (Gagarin 1986: 130, n. 27).

In sources up to the end of the fourth century, only a few bits of information are preserved about the content of the law codes of Zaleucus and Charondas. Of Zaleucus, Ephorus says that he was one of the first to set fixed penalties for crimes and praises him for instituting simpler rules for contracts (Strabo 6.1.8). Aristotle mentions a law at Locri that forbade people from selling their estate unless some evident misfortune had befallen them, and it is reasonable to assume that this law belonged to Zaleucus (*Pol.* 1266b18). Demosthenes reports the law that anyone who wanted to propose a change to an existing statute had to do so with his neck in a noose, with which he was hung, if the proposal failed (*Against Timocrates* 139–41. See also Polybius 12.16). Aristotle reports that the laws of Charondas were particularly precise, although there was nothing unique about them except that he introduced the procedure of denunciation into his law about false witness (*Pol.* 1247b5–8). Elsewhere Aristotle reports that Charondas imposed greater fines on the wealthy than on the poor, if they failed to serve on a jury (*Pol.* 1297a2–4). Finally, according to Theophrastus, Charondas legislated that goods should be paid for when they were delivered and that there would be no legal remedy, if the seller extended credit and was never repaid (Stobaeus 4.2.20).

In contrast to this meager collection of evidence, much more extensive material is suddenly available to Diodorus in the first century BC; by that time *Preludes to the Laws* ascribed both to Zaleucus and Charondas were probably in circulation. Diodorus’ account of their laws is over ten pages long (12.12–21). The *Preludes* are preserved by Stobaeus. In Thesleff’s edition, that of Charondas is three pages long and that of Zaleucus two. In later sources Zaleucus and Charondas are also called Pythagoreans (Diodorus 12.19–20; Iambl. *VP* 33, 104, 130, 172 and 267; Porph. *VP* 21; Diog. Laert. 8.16), although none of the fourth-century sources mention any such connection. This burgeoning of evidence in later antiquity in contrast with skimpy fourth-century evidence mirrors, on a smaller scale, what happens with Pythagoras. The great accounts of Pythagoras

and Pythagoreanism in the third century AD by Diogenes Laertius, Porphyry and Iamblichus represent a huge increase in “information” about Pythagoras over what was known in the fourth century. Most scholars agree, moreover, that the same explanation accounts for the increase in supposed knowledge about Pythagoras on the one hand and Zaleucus and Charondas on the other: material was forged and legends invented about the great men, starting in the Hellenistic period. Indeed, if the extensive material reported by Diodorus or the *Preludes* preserved by Stobaeus were genuine and hence available to Aristotle in the fourth century, it is incredible that he would not have referred to them in his survey of earlier laws.

Thus, it is the clear consensus of scholars of early Greek law and history that only the material reported by sources up to the end of the fourth century can be accepted as at all reliable concerning Zaleucus and Charondas; Diodorus’ account of their activity along with the preludes to their laws preserved in Stobaeus are later fabrications and totally unreliable (Dunbabin 1968: 70–1; Graham 1982: 191; Gagarin 1986: 58, n. 21; 62). Mühl argued that Diodorus preserved authentic material, although some spurious matter had also become attached to it (1929: 124). Dunbabin rightly points out, however, that this conclusion “is not justified by the evidence that [Mühl] quotes” and that “there is no point of contact between Diodorus and the older tradition” (1968: 71). Adcock sets the situation out clearly by distinguishing between the primary tradition up to the end of the fourth century, which preserves material that is credible, in light of what is known of other early Greek law codes, and the later secondary tradition, which has a quite different character. Adcock shows that, in the secondary tradition, the laws of Zaleucus and Charondas lose the “matter-of-factness” that is characteristic of early Greek law and take on an ethical tone, which suggests the view promulgated by Plato in the *Laws* that philosophy is prior to statecraft. At the same time, the chronology of the lawgivers is disrupted to make them pupils of the philosopher Pythagoras (570–490 BC) and laws become detached from any specific lawgiver and are assigned now to one and now to another (Adcock 1927: 102).

Delatte, who carried out the last detailed study of the *Preludes to the Laws* of Zaleucus and Charondas as well as the material on Zaleucus and Charondas preserved by Diodorus, came to a different conclusion. He recognizes that “the ideas expressed are too philosophical, the style

too recherché, and the language too late to assign them to early law-givers” (1922a: 179). Nonetheless, he does not suppose that these texts were forged after 300 BC, as in the dominant modern view. Instead, he supposes that Pythagorean legislative reformers of the fifth century, who were adapting the legislation of Zaleucus and Charondas to serve as law codes for cities in Italy and Sicily such as Sybaris and Thurii, composed preludes to these legislative texts to serve as a public moral code and assigned these preludes to “the venerable names of the past,” Zaleucus and Charondas (1922a: 183–4). Thus, the works are forgeries in that they are not the work of Zaleucus and Charondas, but they were composed by Pythagoreans of the fifth century and thus are important early evidence for Pythagorean political philosophy. These texts were then further transformed in the later tradition in ways that explain their late language.

What evidence does Delatte offer for this view? His view depends on one crucial premise: in the fourth century Aristoxenus agreed, against all chronological probability, that Zaleucus and Charondas were Pythagoreans. Delatte reasons that he cannot have done so unless he had strong evidence that they were in fact Pythagoreans (1922a: 182). Thus, it was precisely these fifth century texts ascribed to Zaleucus and Charondas, which were full of Pythagorean ideas, that Aristoxenus used as evidence that Zaleucus and Charondas were Pythagoreans. So Delatte’s case stands or falls with Aristoxenus’ supposed belief that Zaleucus and Charondas were Pythagoreans. How secure is that premise? Most modern scholars have accepted it. Wehrli included the assertion that Zaleucus and Charondas were Pythagoreans as part of fragment 43 (= Diog. Laert. 8.15–16) in his collection of the fragments of Aristoxenus and Burkert accepts the fragment and the assertion as belonging to Aristoxenus (1972: 108). Delatte himself (1922a: 177) had relied on an argument that section 130 of Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, where again Zaleucus and Charondas are called Pythagoreans, was derived from Aristoxenus, a view which Rohde (1871–2 = 1901: 149–50) had earlier supported and which Dillon and Hershbll have more recently followed (1991: 149, n. 6). More recently Zhmud accepts this scholarly consensus and cites fragment 17 of Aristoxenus (= Porph. VP 21–2) as further support. Yet, despite this impressive array of scholarly opinion, in none of these texts (Diog. Laert. 8.15–16 = fr. 43 W, Iambl. VP 130 [see also 33, 104 and 172] and Porph. VP 21–2 = fr. 17 W), is the assertion that Zaleucus and Charondas were

Pythagoreans directly ascribed to Aristoxenus. In each case this assertion is in a passage that follows or precedes material that clearly is derived from Aristoxenus, but, while it is possible that the assertion also belonged to Aristoxenus, close examination of the passages shows that it is more likely that it did not.

Here is the text of Diogenes Laertius 8.15–16 (= fr. 43 Wehrli) in translation:

(15) Down to Philolaus it was not possible to know any Pythagorean doctrine. This man alone published the three famous books which Plato sent a hundred minae to purchase. Not less than six hundred met with him at the evening lectures. And if some should be judged worthy to see him, they wrote to their family, as if they had met with great good fortune. And indeed, the inhabitants of Metapontum called his house a temple of Demeter and his street the street of the Muses, as Favorinus says in his *Miscellaneous Researches*.

And the other Pythagoreans used to say that not all things were to be spoken to all people, as Aristoxenus says in the tenth book of *Rules of Teaching*. (16) There [he] also [says] that Xenophilus the Pythagorean, when asked how he could best educate his son, said, “if he should be born in a well-governed city-state.”

And [Pythagoras] turned many in Italy into fine and good men, but especially both Zaleucus and Charondas, the lawgivers. For he had the ability to make friendships and especially, if he learned that someone followed his watchwords, he immediately attached himself to him and made him a friend. (17) His watchwords were as follows . . .

Only the portion of the text in the middle paragraph quoted above is likely to come from Aristoxenus. The assertion that “the other Pythagoreans used to say that not all things were to be spoken to all people” is guaranteed by the explicit assertion “as Aristoxenus says.” The story about Xenophilus in the next sentence is clearly also from Aristoxenus, both because of the words “there also,” which can only refer to the tenth book of Aristoxenus’ *On the Rules of Teaching*, which has just been mentioned, and also because Aristoxenus studied with Xenophilus and is thus a likely source for anecdotes about him.

It is usually assumed that the next two sentences in section 16 of Diogenes (the third paragraph quoted above) also derive from Aristoxenus. Wehrli included them as part of fragment 43 and this is accepted by Burkert (1972: 108). Rohde earlier argued for the same view on the basis of the grammatical continuity of the passage (1871–2 = 1901: 149, n. 1) and Mewaldt used parallels from elsewhere in Diogenes to suggest that he was assigning the whole passage to Aristoxenus (1904: 34–8). At first sight, these appear to be reasonable arguments, since the first of the two sentences, with its mention of Zaleucus and Charondas, continues the indirect statement of the preceding sentence and it is thus natural to assume that “Aristoxenus says” still governs the construction. Nonetheless, this is an assumption, and Zeller long ago pointed out that it was not certain that the assertion about Zaleucus and Charondas was derived from Aristoxenus (1919: 1.1.399, n. 3). Closer examination shows, moreover, that this sentence is unlikely to go back to Aristoxenus. No subject is expressed in this sentence and scholars usually provide an understood “Pythagoras” as the subject, as I have done in the translation above. Indeed, the subject must be Pythagoras, since it describes someone as having a wide impact on improving the morality of individuals in Italy, including the lawgivers Zaleucus and Charondas. If this sentence were a continuation of the quotation from Aristoxenus, however, the subject would have to be supplied from the subject in the previous sentence, Xenophilus. On the other hand, Diogenes Laertius is writing a book specifically on the life of Pythagoras, so that if he writes sentences or inserts sentences from another source in which the subject is not expressed, it is natural to assume that the subject is Pythagoras. The same argument cannot be made concerning Aristoxenus, since the work from which this fragment is quoted is not a life of Pythagoras but rather *The Rules of Teaching*, and the other fragments of that work give no indication that Pythagoras was understood as the main subject throughout the work. Therefore, since the sentence about Zaleucus and Charondas cannot literally be a continuation of the previous quotation from Aristoxenus, which had Xenophilus as its subject, the switch to an understood Pythagoras as subject shows that Diogenes is switching to another source at this point, which he quotes to explain the assertion of Xenophilus quoted from Aristoxenus. Thus, the assertion in Diogenes Laertius 8.16 that Zaleucus and Charondas were Pythagoreans is not likely to derive from Aristoxenus.

Is the same true of Iamblichus VP 130? Rohde argued that the description of Zaleucus and Charondas as Pythagoreans in this passage was derived from Aristoxenus (1871–2 = 1901: 149–50) and he was followed in this by Dillon and Hershbell (1991: 149, n. 6), although not by Wehrli (1967) or Staab (2002: 345, n. 850). Delatte also relied on this passage as the central piece of evidence for his view that Aristoxenus thought Zaleucus and Charondas to be Pythagoreans (1922a: 177). There are, however, again difficulties with this view. Rohde's argument started from the fact that a sentence from section 249 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (p. 134, 1–4 Deubner), which is part of a passage clearly identified by Iamblichus as coming from Aristoxenus, is repeated word for word at the end of section 129, immediately before the section that refers to Zaleucus and Charondas in 130. Iamblichus very commonly repeats passages in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, so that there is no surprise that he should use these same words of Aristoxenus in two different places. Rohde's argument was that since we know this sentence to be derived from Aristoxenus, the material that immediately follows it, which includes the reference to Zaleucus and Charondas, is also likely to come from Aristoxenus. It is important to note that while Iamblichus frequently uses the same passage in different parts of his work, we have no evidence that Aristoxenus did so. Thus, the sentence that appears both in section 129 and 249 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* comes from only one passage of Aristoxenus. This creates a problem for supposing that the material immediately following the appearance of the sentence in section 129 comes from Aristoxenus, since that material is not found following the sentence in section 249, although the material following it in 249 is still part of Iamblichus' long quotation from Aristoxenus running from section 248 through section 251. Therefore, in order to argue that the material in section 130 following the appearance of the sentence in section 129 comes from Aristoxenus, one must suppose that, when quoting the passage in 249, Iamblichus cut out the material that is preserved in 130. This is a little surprising, since Iamblichus appears to be presenting Aristoxenus' continuous narrative of the troubles that befell the Pythagoreans in sections 248–51, but there are parallels for Iamblichus editing and rearranging passages that he quotes, so there is no insurmountable difficulty in supposing that he cut material out of Aristoxenus' account following the sentence in section 249, while keeping that material following the sentence in section 129. It is important

to note, however, that, so far as Iamblichus’ methods go, it is just as plausible that he chose to quote only one sentence of Aristoxenus in section 129 and went on to another source in section 130 as that the material in 130 is from Aristoxenus but was cut by Iamblichus in section 249. The use of the sentence in section 129 makes it possible that what follows is Aristoxenus but creates no presumption in favor of that conclusion.

In order to make any further determination as to whether the material in section 130 derives from Aristoxenus, the best procedure is to look at the long passage quoted in sections 248–51 and see if it makes sense that Aristoxenus would have included the material from section 130 in his original text. Does that material accord with Aristoxenus’ goals in the passage? First, there is no obvious lacuna in the story as told in section 249. The repeated sentence says “up to a point the nobility of the Pythagoreans and the will of the cities themselves prevailed so that they wished their political affairs to be managed by those men.” The next sentence begins “but in the end” (τέλος δέ), which is clearly intended to contrast with “up to a point” (μέχρι τινός) in the previous sentence. The material in 130 is thus not directly necessary to the sense of section 249. Moreover, rhetorically the material from section 130 is at odds with the rest of Aristoxenus’ account of the Pythagorean troubles in sections 248–51. Aristoxenus presents the troubles as arising towards the end of Pythagoras’ life, when Pythagoras refused to allow a dissolute aristocrat named Cylon to become a Pythagorean. The hostility of Cylon and his followers led Pythagoras to leave Croton for Metapontum, where he died. After his death, Aristoxenus tells us that the Cylonians continued to create division in society and displayed total enmity to the Pythagoreans. It is at this point that the repeated sentence appears telling us that the Pythagoreans nevertheless prevailed for a while. The material from 130 does not fit very well in this context, because it does not present the Pythagoreans as in any way embattled nor is there any sign of the continuing *stasis* fomented by the Cylonians. Instead, we are told that this was a golden age for government in Sicily and Southern Italy (“At this time the best governments are thought to have come about in Italy and Sicily”). This awkwardness creates serious doubts that section 130 could have originally stood in Aristoxenus’ account of the fall of the Pythagoreans in VP 248–51 and thus suggests that VP 130 should not be ascribed to Aristoxenus.

Thus neither Diogenes Laertius 8.15–16 (= fr. 43) nor Iamblichus *VP* 130 suggests that Aristoxenus regarded Zaleucus and Charondas as Pythagoreans. This leaves Porphyry *VP* 21–2 (= fr. 17 Wehrli) as the last passage cited by scholars to show that Aristoxenus did regard Zaleucus and Charondas as Pythagoreans. This passage says that Pythagoras gave laws to south Italian states through Zaleucus and Charondas. A few lines following this assertion Porphyry explicitly quotes Aristoxenus as saying that certain non-Greek Italian peoples (Lucanians, Messapians and Peucetians) came to Pythagoras. Once again the assertion about Zaleucus and Charondas is not directly assigned to Aristoxenus. The argument that it should be assigned to him is simply the suggestion that Porphyry started drawing on Aristoxenus in section 21 before he explicitly refers to him in section 22. However, Porphyry is good about naming his sources and he explicitly identifies Nicomachus as his source in *VP* 20. The whole passage from *VP* 20 to the end of *VP* 22 maintains a hagiographical tone that is characteristic of Nicomachus and it is likely that Nicomachus is his source for the whole passage. The reference to Aristoxenus is limited to the one line in which his name occurs and was probably made by Nicomachus and taken over by Porphyry in his quotation of this long passage from Nicomachus (see further Huffman 2014b: 292–3). The single sentence from Aristoxenus quoted by Nicomachus/Porphyry is quoted elsewhere in the tradition by itself, which suggests that it did indeed circulate by itself without a broader context (Burkert 1972: 119, n. 60). The idea that Zaleucus and Charondas were Pythagoreans fits very well with Nicomachus' over-the-top description of Pythagoras as freeing all of the Italian cities and doing away with all factionalism both between and within cities but does not suit Aristoxenus who recounts the faction of Cylon.

Thus, the passages that have been used in the past to show that Aristoxenus regarded Zaleucus and Charondas as Pythagoreans do not support such a conclusion. One final piece of evidence must be considered. Zaleucus and Charondas also appear as Pythagoreans in the catalogue of Pythagoreans at the end of Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, which is likely to be based on the work of Aristoxenus. Zhmud (2012a: 114) takes the catalogue as evidence that Aristoxenus was following a “venerable, though unreliable Pythagorean tradition” in making Zaleucus and Charondas Pythagoreans. However, the catalogue, even if based on the work of Aristoxenus, has been

extensively modified so that it is impossible to use it by itself as evidence for Aristoxenus’ views (Huffman 2008b). The catalogue includes figures from legend such as Abaris, who would scarcely have been treated as Pythagoreans by Aristoxenus and just as the catalogue was altered in the later tradition to include Abaris so Zaleucus and Charondas were added. Indeed, it is highly implausible that Aristoxenus would regard Zaleucus and Charondas as Pythagoreans. Aristoxenus’ teacher, Aristotle, clearly presents them as active in the seventh century, long before Pythagoras was even born (see above). Moreover, the Peripatos made a systematic collection of material on early Greek constitutions, which surely must have been the basis for Aristotle’s dating of Zaleucus and Charondas. In the light of this research in the Peripatos it is hard to believe that Aristoxenus would have been so confused as to make Zaleucus and Charondas the pupils of Pythagoras. Earlier scholars such as Zeller therefore had good reason to refuse to accept that Aristoxenus could have made such a chronological blunder (Rohde 1871–2 = 1901: 149, n.1).

Once it is seen that Aristoxenus did not regard Zaleucus and Charondas as Pythagoreans, Delatte’s argument for the existence of the *Preludes to the Laws* of Zaleucus and Charondas in the fourth century falls apart. There is moreover a strong argument to show that the *Preludes* could not have existed in the middle of the fourth century, when Plato wrote the *Laws*. At *Laws* 722e, Plato’s Athenian stranger asserts emphatically that no one had ever composed a prelude (προοίμιον) to laws. Scholars even before Delatte had seen that this meant that the supposed preludes of Zaleucus and Charondas must have been composed after the *Laws* and more recent scholars still rely on this point for rejecting the *Preludes* as legitimate early evidence (Dunbabin 1968: 70–1). Delatte recognized the force of this argument and developed what he took to be a refutation of it (1922a: 180–1). Since modern scholars have not responded directly to Delatte’s argument, it is important to examine it here. Delatte’s point is that Plato defines prelude (προοίμιον) in such a narrow way that the *Preludes* ascribed to Zaleucus and Charondas would not have fit the definition. Thus, Plato could assert that no preludes to laws, defined in his narrow sense, existed, although preludes of another sort, such as those ascribed to Zaleucus and Charondas, were already in existence.

Delatte's argument fails. He argues that for Plato a prelude was a prelude to a specific law and not to a body of laws, whereas the *Preludes* of Zaleucus and Charondas are more general and not tied to a specific law (1922a: 181). Even if we grant that this is what Plato meant by a prelude, it remains incredible that, if works called *Preludes to Laws* and ascribed to two of the most famous early Greek lawgivers were in existence, he would blithely assert that no one had ever composed a prelude to laws, with no allusion to these famous preludes already in circulation. He would surely have to forestall confusion by saying that he realizes that works called *Preludes* were indeed written by these famous lawgivers and go on to explain how they failed to serve the purpose he had in mind. As a matter of fact, however, Plato goes on to say that it is necessary that the lawgiver provide preludes "both before *the laws as a whole* (my emphasis) and for each individual law" (723b – πρὸ πάντων τε . . . τῶν νόμων . . . καὶ καθ' ἕκαστον) so that Delatte is wrong to assert that Plato envisages preludes as only tied to specific laws. Moreover, later, in Book 10 of the *Laws* at 887b–c, Plato explicitly refers to a prelude that should be found before *all* their laws (τοῦτο ἡμῖν ὑπὲρ πάντων τῶν νόμων κάλλιστόν τε καὶ ἄριστον προοίμιον ἂν εἴη). Most arresting of all, the content that he proposes for that prelude, that the gods exist and honor justice, is precisely the central tenet stated in the first line of the *Prelude to the Laws* assigned to Zaleucus in the later tradition: "it is necessary that the inhabitants of the city . . . believe that the gods exist" (Thesleff 1965: 226.25). A few lines later it is said to be necessary that the citizens "remember that the gods exist and impose justice on the unjust" (Thesleff 1965: 227.7–8).

It thus becomes very difficult to believe that Plato could have maintained that no one had ever provided a prelude to the laws, and specifically mean by that a prelude which stood before all the laws and had as its central tenet that the gods exist and care for justice, if just such a prelude under the name of the famous lawgiver Zaleucus existed, when he was writing the *Laws*. It is surely more reasonable to conclude that Plato knew of no such prelude. Nor will it do to say that the *Preludes* were not known under that name in the fourth century, since at the end of the *Prelude* of Charondas, what has gone before is explicitly described as a prelude (Thesleff 1965: 63.5). Not only is Plato unaware of the *Preludes*, Aristotle makes no mention of them, when he discusses Zaleucus and Charondas. These are arguments from silence, but, in

both cases, it is important to note that they have more force than most such arguments. It is not just that Plato and Aristotle do not mention the *Preludes to the Laws* of Zaleucus and Charondas. Both Plato and Aristotle were engaged in activities that should have led them to find out about and mention these works, if they existed. Plato was specifically studying the issue of the necessity for preludes to laws and Aristotle carried out systematic surveys of early Greek constitutions and law codes as part of the research program in the Lyceum.

Delatte rightly demands that anyone who is trying to explain the origin of the *Preludes to the Laws* of Zaleucus and Charondas give some account of what could have led to their origin. The account is the same that explains the origin of many of the pseudo-Pythagorean treatises (Huffman 2005: 91–100, 595–620), for example the treatise forged in the name of Timaeus of Locri. That document is patently an attempt to show that Plato derived the central ideas of his philosophy from the Pythagoreans. It takes its lead from Plato himself, who makes an otherwise unknown Timaeus the main speaker of the dialogue *Timaeus*. The forgery provides the written treatise of this Timaeus, which shows just how dependent Plato was on the Pythagoreans for his ideas. In the case of the *Preludes to the Laws* of Zaleucus and Charondas, the forger(s) again take their lead from Plato. In the *Laws*, Plato outlines the need for preludes to laws that try to persuade citizens rather than just compel them and identifies belief in the justice of the gods as a central tenet in such introductions. The *Preludes to the Laws* of Zaleucus and Charondas provide just what Plato was calling for and show that, once again, the Pythagoreans anticipated him, this time in the form of the famous lawgivers, who are enrolled as Pythagoreans, despite chronological difficulties, because they come from southern Italy and Sicily, where Pythagoras held sway. Some of the pseudo-Pythagorean forgeries betray much later Neopythagorean ideas, but a number of them work primarily with Platonic and Aristotelian ideas, trying to show that the Pythagoreans anticipated these ideas. Thus, while Delatte is right that the *Preludes to the Laws* show no evidence of specifically Neopythagorean ideas (1922a: 182), this in no way shows that they cannot be forgeries of the same general type as the Timaeus Locrus or Archytas’ supposed treatises on categories, which also have few Neopythagorean ideas.

There is even further evidence that the material in Diodorus and in the *Preludes to the Laws* of Zaleucus and Charondas is a later forgery. There is very little overlap between this later material and the material attested for Zaleucus and Charondas by Aristotle and other fourth-century sources. If the later material were drawing on the same tradition as the fourth-century authors but providing a more extensive account of that tradition, it would be reasonable to expect that some of the features of the fourth-century evidence would appear in the later accounts. The only significant overlap is the rule that someone proposing to change a law had to put his neck in a noose. However, even here there is a problem, since the later tradition is confused about to whom to assign it. The noose is mentioned in the *Prelude to the Laws* of Zaleucus (Thesleff 1965: 228.17), but Diodorus assigns this to Charondas (12.17–18), whereas Demosthenes, in the fourth century, assigns it to Locri and hence to Zaleucus (*Against Timocrates* 139–41). The specific laws assigned to Charondas and Zaleucus by Aristotle and Theophrastus, such as the ban on selling of estates at Locri (Arist. *Pol.* 1266b19–21), Charondas' law on false witness (Arist. *Pol.* 1272b6–8), and his requirements that goods be paid for on delivery (Theophrastus in Stob. 4.2.20) and that wealthier citizens pay a higher fine for missing jury duty than the poor (Arist. *Pol.* 1297a21–4) do not appear in the late material. Similarly, Aristotle mentions a distinctive term “messmate” (ὁμοσίπτυος), which appeared in the legislation of Charondas (*Pol.* 1252b14), but no such term is found in the later evidence for Charondas. This pattern of evidence thus suggests that the material in Diodorus and the *Preludes* was developed independently of the tradition known to fourth-century authors, and while it is always possible that later sources discovered evidence not available in the fourth century, the more likely explanation is that the later material was invented. There is even a little evidence that the later tradition was invented as a specific repudiation of the more cautious fourth-century evidence. Thus, Aristotle asserts “there is nothing unique (ἴδιον) in [the law-code of] Charondas except the trials for false witness” (*Pol.* 1274b5–7). Diodorus' account, on the other hand, begins by asserting that Charondas invented “many unique things” (πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἴδια 12.11.4) and he repeatedly emphasizes aspects of Charondas' legislation that were superior to laws of other lawgivers (12.12.3, 12.12.4; 12.16).

Given this understanding of the nature of Diodorus’ account of Zaleucus and Charondas and the *Preludes to the Laws* preserved in their name by Stobaeus, what can be made of the similarities between the *Pythagorean Precepts* and these documents? To begin with, there are not as many close parallels as scholars have supposed. There are not any particularly noteworthy parallels between the *Prelude to the Laws* of Charondas and the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Scholars have instead pointed to a passage describing the laws of Charondas in Diodorus, where obedience to the law is commanded, even if the law is completely wrong (12.16.3) and have compared it to the assertion in fragment 8, which approves “abiding by the customs and laws of their fathers, even if they should be somewhat worse than those of others.” Deubner (1975) even wanted to emend the text of fragment 8 on the basis of this supposed parallel. The two passages are, however, making a somewhat different point (see the detailed commentary on μικρῶ below) and are not closely connected, as indeed Deubner’s attempt to emend fragment 8 to bring it into accord with Diodorus’ report about Charondas shows. Moreover, a passage in Aristotle’s *Politics* (1268b26–8) makes it quite clear that “some people” had already set out the position described in fragment 8 at the time of the composition of the *Politics* and it seems quite likely that this is a reference precisely to the Pythagoreans (again see the detailed commentary on μικρῶ below).

The only similarities of importance then are those between fragment 8 and the *Prelude to the Laws* of Zaleucus. Both texts advise 1) that people believe that the gods exist, because such a belief will encourage just behavior (Thesleff 1965: 227.5–14) and 2) that after the divine most attention should be paid to parents and the laws (Thesleff 1965: 227.23–5). Moreover, the *Prelude* 3) recognizes that anarchy is the greatest of evils (Thesleff 1965: 228.9–10), which is asserted in another fragment of the *Pythagorean Precepts* (fr. 2) and 4) uses similar language to describe those who are “saved” by the supervision of the gods and their parents (Zaleucus 227.25 σωθησομένοις; fr. 8, line 25 διασωῆσθαι). None of these points is exclusive to the *Prelude* and fragment 8, however; all are widely held views in the fifth and fourth centuries. I have shown this for points 2 and 3 elsewhere (Huffman 2008a: 108–9). The first point assumes that there is a connection between belief in the gods and human morality. I have shown above, in the discussion of the connection between Plato and fragment 8, that this belief too is widespread in the

fifth and fourth centuries and is formulated in a similar way not just in Plato's *Laws* but also in Isocrates, Xenophon and tragedy. It also appears in the orators (Dover 1974: 257–61). Thus in Lycurgus' speech *Against Leocrates* (79) it is asserted that "A man cannot perjure himself without the gods knowing of it, nor can he escape punishment at their hands; and if not he himself, then the children and all descendants of the perjurer fall into great misfortune" (tr. Dover). With regard to point 4, once again, there are passages in Xenophon and Plato that also use a similar conception of being saved (see the commentary on fr. 2, line 2).

In contrast to these general points of agreement, the specifics of the arguments in the passages are quite different and show the *Prelude* of Zaleucus to be closer to Plato's *Laws* than to the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Thus fragment 8 emphasizes the basically hubristic (ὕβριστικόν) and variable (ποικίλον) character of human nature and its need for supervision that cannot be evaded. This is not the emphasis in the *Prelude* of Zaleucus, which never uses either of these terms. The *Prelude to the Laws* of Zaleucus gives the argument from design for the existence of the gods (see διακόσμησιν καὶ τάξιν and δημιουργήματα at Thesleff 1965: 226.26–7), which is not found in fragment 8 but does appear in *Laws* 10 (886a– διακεκοσμημένα). Fragment 8 does appeal to the gods' rule of the universe but not to argue that the *order* found in the universe can only be explained by divine action but rather to show that the gods have the supervisory power (ἐπιστατεία . . . ὑπεροχή) to check unruly human nature, since they have the power to rule the universe (lines 9–16). Again, the *Prelude to the Laws* of Zaleucus argues that the gods cannot be moved by expensive offerings (Thesleff 1965: 226.30–2), which is not a point made in the *Precepts* but is a prominent theme in Book 10 of the *Laws* (885b, 905d). Zaleucus also emphasizes that, in their actions in this life, humans should picture themselves being judged by the gods after death (Thesleff 1965: 227.7–13), whereas there is no hint of such a final judgment in the *Precepts*. Finally, on one point Zaleucus contradicts fragment 8 fairly directly. Fragment 8 says nothing about changing laws and stresses that laws should be kept even if they are somewhat worse than others, whereas Zaleucus says that any unsatisfactory law should be changed (228.5–6). Thus the specific development of the general points is not at all similar in Zaleucus and fragment 8. The similarity in the use of some form of the verb σώζω in both Zaleucus and fragment 8 (point 4 above) suggests, at most, that ps.-Zaleucus

might have used the section of the *Precepts* preserved in fragment 8 as one source among many.

Delatte’s earlier study of the contents of the *Preludes to the Laws* of Charondas and Zaleucus is, in fact, largely in agreement with the points made above. Delatte was at pains to emphasize that a number of the ideas found in the *Preludes* belong to the morality of all times and that a number of the parallels between the *Preludes* and Pythagorean texts cannot pretend to represent ideas that are exclusively Pythagorean. The crucial point for his thesis was just that the *Preludes* had enough material that looked Pythagorean for Aristoxenus to have regarded their authors as Pythagorean (1922a: 188). The specific parallels that Delatte adduces show, in fact, that the *Preludes*, and especially the *Prelude* of Charondas, have many more parallels with Plato’s *Laws* than with the *Pythagorean Precepts* (1922a: 188–202).

In summary, then, fragment 8, Plato’s *Laws* and the *Preludes to the Laws* of Zaleucus and Charondas all adopt a widespread conservative morality that emphasizes the importance of belief in the gods and respect for the authority of parents and the laws in producing moral behavior. Fragment 8, however, shows none of the features that are specific to Plato’s development of these themes in the *Laws* or to the development of these themes in the *Preludes to the Laws* of Zaleucus and Charondas. This is best explained by assuming that fragment 8 is what it purports to be, an account of Pythagorean ethics of the fourth century, which shows similarity to Plato’s view on general issues but develops its own distinctive emphasis in dealing with these issues. The *Preludes to the Laws* of Zaleucus and Charondas, on the other hand, show closer connection to Plato than to fragment 8 in the overall number of parallels, as Delatte’s study shows, and particularly in developing themes such as the argument from design and the thesis that the gods cannot be swayed by the gifts of bad men. They show their true nature, however, above all in presenting themselves as preludes to laws of exactly the form called for by Plato in the *Laws*. It is this claim to be preludes that shows them to be forgeries and to be developed primarily in reliance on Plato but it is not impossible that these authors also drew on other sources, such as the *Precepts*.

The forged *Preludes to the Laws* of Zaleucus and Charondas did have some success in their goal of showing that the Pythagoreans had anticipated Plato in developing the concept of a prelude to laws. Thus, in his

Laws, Cicero says that he will follow Plato's example in providing a prelude to his laws, which praises them and seeks to persuade the citizens to follow them rather than just compelling obedience by force (*Leg.* 14–16). Cicero adds, however, that Zaleucus and Charondas followed the same practice and concedes the point of the forgeries, when he comments that Plato imitated them (*Leg.* 14: quos imitatus Plato).

Strikingly, Cicero also notes that the historian Timaeus (350–260 BC) had denied Zaleucus' existence. Cicero himself takes no stand on the issue but reports that Theophrastus, who is just as reliable or more reliable than Timaeus, affirmed Zaleucus' existence. The same controversy is alluded to in one of Cicero's letters to Atticus (115 = 6.1). Scholars have rightly wondered whether Timaeus' doubts might not have really been about Zaleucus' existence but rather about Zaleucus' connections to the Pythagorean forgeries (Jacoby *FGrHist* 566 F 130a – see Dyck 2004 for further references to scholarship). Dyck rejects such suggestions, since it would appear to make Cicero misrepresent Timaeus twice (2004: 282). Yet there is already some inconsistency in Cicero's report, since in the *Laws* he reports that Timaeus denied that Zaleucus existed, while in the letter to Atticus, he is reported to have rejected the tradition that Zaleucus wrote laws for the Locrians, not that he existed. It seems possible that Timaeus knew of the forged *Prelude* of Zaleucus and denied that this Zaleucus had really written laws for the Locrians or indeed that the Zaleucus who had written the prelude had ever existed as a historical lawgiver. If it were certain that Timaeus knew about the forged prelude, it would help us date it to around 300 BC or a little later, i.e. some time after Aristotle, who shows no knowledge of the prelude in his discussion of Zaleucus, and before Timaeus wrote his history in the first half of the third century. We know nothing of Theophrastus' account of Zaleucus (frs. 598b and 598c, FHSG) except what Cicero tells us, i.e. that he accepted his existence and that he gave laws to the Locrians, presumably in agreement with Aristotle. Polybius, although he does not mention Zaleucus, also tells us that Timaeus disputed Theophrastus' and Aristotle's account of Locri (12.11.5). The text is problematic so it is not completely clear what Polybius thought the focus of Timaeus' criticism was.

The prelude that Cicero himself constructs gives no indication that he relied on the *Pythagorean Precepts* in any way. Besides the basic point that the citizens should believe that the gods exist and pay attention to

mortals, which is surely derived from the sources that Cicero cites (i.e. Plato, “Zaleucus” and “Charondas”), there is little similarity with fragment 8. Cicero’s arguments for the existence of the gods are not found in fragment 8, which agrees that the gods rule the cosmos but gives none of Cicero’s arguments based on rationality. Similarly Cicero’s emphasis on the usefulness of the gods in guaranteeing oaths and treaties is not found in fragment 8.

Fragment 8 and “Hippodamus”

The case of the connection of Hippodamus to the *Pythagorean Precepts* is in many ways similar to that of Zaleucus and Charondas, but there are also significant differences. Hippodamus has often been thought of as the first Greek town planner and as the inventor of the orthogonal-grid city plan, which was supposed to have been found by archaeologists in his native city of Miletus. Modern scholarship has shown that town planning, including versions of a grid plan, originated before Hippodamus, however (Shipley 2005). Although Hippodamus did come from Miletus, no ancient source assigns him any role in the rebuilding of Miletus after the Persian wars, and the grid plan commonly presented of that rebuilt city is now thought to reflect later Hellenistic and Roman plans rather than fifth-century plans (Shipley 2005: 362–5). Nonetheless, Hippodamus is still recognized as the most famous town planner of the fifth century and is particularly associated with the planning of three cities: 1) the port city of Athens, Piraeus, sometime around the middle of the fifth century, 2) the Pan-Hellenic colony of Thurii, founded in southern Italy in 444–3, and 3) the new city of Rhodes founded in 408 BC. Early attempts to connect him with the rebuilding of Miletus had pushed his birth back to 500 or before, which made him rather improbably old to be working on Rhodes in 408. A coherent story of his clearly attested work can be constructed, if the assumption that he rebuilt Miletus is laid aside. He may have been born in the 480s, worked on Piraeus and Thurii in the middle of his career, and been in his seventies when working on Rhodes in 408 (Burns 1976: 421–5; Shipley 2005: 365).

There are three references from the late fifth and early fourth centuries to an agora in Piraeus that was named the Hippodameia after him, presumably in commemoration of his work there (Andoc. 1.45; Xen.

HG 2.4.11; Dem. 49.22). Apart from these references Aristotle is our earliest source and he is the fullest source from any time. He discusses Hippodamus at length in Book 2 of the *Politics*, in his survey of constitutions that had previously existed or that had been proposed by earlier thinkers (Chapter 5 = 1267b22–1269a28). After he has already discussed Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*, Aristotle identifies Hippodamus, the son of Euryphon, a Milesian, as the first person not involved in politics, who took it in hand to speak about the best constitution. Before going on to describe his proposed constitution and to critique it, Aristotle gives a brief sketch of Hippodamus.

The first thing mentioned is his work in town planning: he invented the division of cities (τὴν τῶν πόλεων διαίρεσιν εὔρε) and cut up Piraeus. It is often assumed that the division (διαίρεσις) that Hippodamus invented was a topographical division into various parts, although some scholars have seen this understanding of the division as problematic, since archaeological evidence shows that both orthogonal town plans and divisions of cities into major parts existed before Hippodamus (Shipley 2005). Some scholars, thus, note that Aristotle uses διαίρεσις and the related verb, διαίρέω, elsewhere in Book 2 of the *Politics* to describe the division of the populace into three classes of people and suggest that Aristotle's reference to divisions of the city means divisions of people rather than parts of the city (Shipley 2005: 357). It is true that Aristotle goes on to describe Hippodamus' three classes of citizens using the verb διαίρέω (1267b31). Nonetheless, the initial mention of "the division of the city" comes in a long introductory digression, before Aristotle's discussion of Hippodamus' work in structuring society. The immediate context of the remark is the cutting up of Piraeus and it is thus more likely to refer to spatial divisions of the city. Moreover, the late lexica of Hesychius and Photius have entries on "the division of Hippodamus" indicating that it was for this that he was famous. The word used for division in the lexica, νέμησις, is, outside of this reference to Hippodamus, first found in the orator Isaeus in the first half of the fourth century in a discussion of a dispute over the division of land (9.17). More unusually, it is used on boundary stones which have been found in Piraeus and hence are likely to reflect Hippodamus' own usage (McCredie 1971: 97–8). Both the lexica explain the odd term νέμησις by referring to the division Hippodamus did of Piraeus for the Athenians (διεῖλεν – Hesychius, διένειμεν – Photius). Thus, Aristotle's

reference to him as discovering the division of the city seems overwhelmingly likely to be to a spatial division of Piraeus and not to a theoretical division of the people into classes.

The conflict with archaeological evidence can be reasonably explained. Aristotle is not an archaeologist and he need not know about earlier attempts at town planning. It may be that from his experience and particularly his experience in Athens and Piraeus Hippodamus was the first to divide up the city in a clearly planned way. Moreover, it may be that Aristotle thinks of “the invention of the division of cities” not just in practical but also theoretical terms. Thus, town planning of various sorts had been practiced for a long time, but no one before Hippodamus had given a theoretical account of the proper division of a city, which he then put into effect. Plato in the *Republic* similarly says that no one had yet invented (εὐρῆσθαι) stereometry (528b4–5), although clearly lots of work was going on in the field at the time, when he means that no one had established it as a discipline (Huffman 2005: 386–90). Aristotle may then be claiming that Hippodamus invented town planning as a discipline, even though, of course, people had been planning towns for a very long time. McCredie has argued for a similar view, saying that “the invention . . . which Aristotle attributes to Hippodamus, becomes, then, a *system* with theoretical basis, as contrasted with what must have been the usual empirical practice” (1971: 100).

It is likely that this invention of the division of cities is to be connected with a later remark by Aristotle, which refers to a modern, Hippodamian, fashion in arranging private dwellings in contrast to an archaic fashion (*Pol.* 1330b21–7). The archaic fashion was better for defense in war since, presumably, its disorganized arrangement of streets made it hard for foreigners to enter the city and make their way around it when attacking. The Hippodamian fashion, on the other hand, is praised as more pleasant and more useful for other purposes and described as “well cut-up” (εὖτομος). This description clearly connects to the earlier reference to his “cutting up” (κατέτεμεν) Piraeus and is most plausibly understood as suggesting that he provided an orderly arrangement of city streets that allowed for easy and pleasant communication between various parts of the city, although perhaps making it too easy for enemy combatants to navigate the city. Aristotle does not say and need not be implying that Hippodamus first instituted straight streets, or an orthogonal plan. He need only mean that his town plans

cut up the city in a particularly orderly fashion in contrast with a more chaotic arrangement that existed in many other cities in general and in Piraeus in particular and perhaps that he was the first person to set out a coherent set of principles calling for such a plan. In addition to this town planning, Aristotle, in his introductory sketch, also emphasizes Hippodamus' peculiar way of life, which he pursued in order to gain attention (διὰ φιλοτιμίαν). Aristotle reports that to some his life style seemed over the top. It included long hair, expensive ornaments, and inexpensive but warm clothing, which he wore year-round. Finally, he also aspired to learning concerning the cosmos as a whole. This comment is picked up in the later lexica (Hesychius s.v. Ἱπποδάμου νέμησις, Photius s.v. Ἱπποδάμου νέμησις ἐν Πειραιεῖ), which refer to Hippodamus as a μετεωρολόγος (cosmologist), although no ancient source describes any of his cosmology.

Evidence from later sources is meager and most of it follows Aristotle in emphasizing Hippodamus' connection to Piraeus. There are two other particularly important new pieces of evidence, however. First, Strabo (14.2.9), in discussing Rhodes, says that the present city was founded by the same architect as designed Piraeus, so that, even though Strabo does not mention Hippodamus by name, most scholars now agree that Hippodamus was responsible for planning the new city in 408 (Wycherley 1964; Burns 1976). Hippodamus is also usually said to have planned the famous Pan-Hellenic colony of Thurii (444–443 BC) in southern Italy. The evidence here is more complicated. Diodorus (12.10.6–7) does comment briefly on the town planning of Thurii, noting that there were four main avenues lengthwise and three main avenues crossing these and that the areas enclosed by these avenues were filled out by divisions into smaller streets. Diodorus does not, however, tell us who was responsible for this plan. Aristotle says nothing of Hippodamus' connection to Thurii, but the late lexicographer Hesychius reports that, although a Milesian, Hippodamus settled in Syria (ὁ μετοικήσας εἰς Συριακούς). This comment makes little sense, since no other connection of Hippodamus with Syria is found in the ancient tradition. Several late sources, however, do report that Hippodamus was said to be from Thurii (scholiast on Aristophanes' *Knights* 327, Stobaeus 4.39.26, Photius, *Lexicon* s.v. Ἱπποδάμου νέμησις ἐν Πειραιεῖ; *Suda* s.v. Theano) and most modern scholars thus suppose that Hesychius' text should be emended from Συριακούς to Θουριακούς.

Thus, Hesychius’ report tells us that Hippodamus settled in Thurii. There seem, then, to be good if not iron-clad reasons to think that he was associated with Thurii and, if he was, the sort of plan that Diodorus ascribes to the city would fit with Hippodamus’ work in Piraeus attested by Aristotle as well as with the plan of Rhodes discovered by archaeologists (McCredie 1971). It has indeed been the standard view that Hippodamus was responsible for the town plan of Thurii (CAH 5.142 [Lewis], 203 [Wycherley], 316 [Ostwald]). The evidence thus suggests that Hippodamus was the most famous town planner of the fifth century and specifically planned Piraeus, Thurii and Rhodes. Aristotle regarded him as the first person to develop a theoretical account of the principles of town planning.

What then does this Hippodamus have to do with Pythagoreanism in general and the *Pythagorean Precepts* in particular? It is important to note that neither Aristotle nor any of the primary later sources for Hippodamus (the *Suda*, Photius, Hesychius) call him a Pythagorean, so that it is very unlikely that he was one. He is only called a Pythagorean in connection with Pythagorean texts written in Doric. Stobaeus quotes four excerpts from a work entitled *On the Republic* and, in the lemmata to two of these, the work is said to be by Hippodamus the Pythagorean (4.34.71 and 4.1.93); the other two fragments are simply said to be found in the same work. The only other author to explicitly call Hippodamus a Pythagorean is Clement of Alexandria, who quotes one line about friendship in Doric and ascribes it to Hippodamus the Pythagorean (*Strom.* 2.19). It is important to note that two other Pythagorean texts in Doric are associated with Hippodamus, although they do not explicitly call him a Pythagorean. Stobaeus provides one excerpt from a different work in Doric entitled *On Happiness*, but this is said to be by Hippodamus of Thurii rather than Hippodamus the Pythagorean (4.39.26). The *Suda* under the heading Theano, who is variously presented in the Pythagorean tradition as the wife or daughter or pupil of Pythagoras (Burkert 1972: 114), reports that she wrote a work *On Virtue* for Hippodamus of Thurii. These two texts suggest that, in some people’s minds, to refer to Hippodamus as from Thurii was equivalent to calling him a Pythagorean, although there is clearly the other tradition discussed above, in which he is associated with Thurii but not regarded as a Pythagorean.

What is the nature of these texts in Doric ascribed to Hippodamus the Pythagorean or Hippodamus of Thurii? Delatte, who did the last detailed study of the fragments, argues that the language and style of the fragments, along with one important borrowing from Plato, shows that they cannot have been composed by a fifth-century author, and date to the Hellenistic period (1922a: 122, 159). He does not, however, regard the treatises as forgeries in the proper sense, i.e. the author is not trying to pass his work off as the work of someone else. He thinks it unlikely that the author intends his readers to think that the works are by the famous Hippodamus for three reasons: 1) the name Hippodamus does not appear in Iamblichus' list of Pythagoreans in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*; 2) the Pythagorean texts have essentially no overlap with Aristotle's account of Hippodamus, whereas a forger would have been likely to include material from Aristotle's account to give verisimilitude to the forgery; 3) the Pythagorean texts are in Doric and Hippodamus was known to have come from an Ionic city, Miletus (1922a: 159). Delatte evidently thinks that Hippodamus was the actual author's name or that he chose it at random. His goal was to write a treatise on themes similar to those present in Pythagorean and Platonic political philosophy of the fifth and fourth centuries. Thus the work is something like a Roman copy of an earlier Greek statue and can be used like Roman statues are, to tell us something about the Pythagorean originals that it is copying, if we proceed cautiously (1922a: 159–60).

The problem with this account of the document is that there really is no parallel for such an exercise. Who would set himself the task, two hundred years later, of writing a fifth-century Pythagorean document just as a way to develop his own thinking on similar topics? On the other hand, there is a very large body of texts that were forged in Doric with the clear intention of passing themselves off as early Pythagorean texts. Despite Delatte's doubts, the treatises in Doric assigned to Hippodamus fit a number of features of these forgeries. It is true that the contents of the fragments are not slavish copies of Platonic or Aristotelian texts such as the *Timaeus* or the treatises of Archytas that emulate Aristotle's *Categories*. The fragments of Hippodamus show a general similarity with ideas in Plato's *Laws* and *Republic* as Delatte shows, but for the most part develop them in somewhat different ways.

The crucial exception, also recognized by Delatte, is that "Hippodamus" builds his republic on a tripartite division of citizens in the state that is

very close to what is found in Plato’s *Republic*. “Hippodamus” establishes three classes: the counselors, the helpers and the artisans (βουλευτικόν, ἐπικούρον, βάνανσον – Thesleff 1965: 98.15–16). This is markedly similar to Plato’s description of the three classes in his *Republic* as the counselors, the helpers and the money-makers (*Resp.* 441a – βουλευτικόν, ἐπικουρητικόν, χρηματιστικόν). The term helpers (ἐπικούροι) is used repeatedly by Plato to refer to the military class in the *Republic* (e.g., 414b and 415a) and, since they play the same role in “Hippodamus”, it is hard to see how this can be anything but an imitation of Plato. The only significant difference between Plato’s three classes and “Hippodamus” is that “Hippodamus” refers to the lowest class as the “artisan” class, whereas Plato calls it the “money-making” class. The three classes as described by Hippodamus also play the same basic roles as Plato’s three classes, in that the counselors rule because of their virtue, while the helpers fight on behalf of the city and the artisans provide the necessities of life. The rest of the fragments of Hippodamus, however, while echoing in a general way Platonic ideas, do not give evidence of being directly derived from Plato in the way the three basic classes of citizens are.

There are, however, two other important ways in which the fragments of Hippodamus fit the pattern of the Pythagorean pseudepigrapha. First, despite Delatte’s protests, it is surely the case that the author intends us to think of Hippodamus as the famous town planner of the fifth century and claim him for Pythagoreanism. Three features of the Pythagorean Hippodamus indicate this connection to the famous Milesian: 1) his name, which is not a particularly common Greek name. It never occurs in Attica, it appears only twice in inscriptions from southern Italy but five times in Laconia (Fraser and Matthews 1987–2005), 2) his association with Thurii and 3) the title of his treatise, *On the Republic*, which should be seen in light of Aristotle’s comment that Hippodamus wrote about the best republic. It is very implausible that the author of the text just happened to pick this unusual Greek name as his pen name and just happened to make him a Thurian who wrote about the ideal republic. Thus, like other Pythagorean pseudepigrapha, notably the pseudepigrapha assigned to Zaleucus and Charondas, the forger seized on a famous name that had connections with southern Italy, and used those connections to claim him as a Pythagorean. The likelihood that he would have written in Ionic rather than Doric, given his Ionian origin, has to be ignored, but this is a mere trifle in

comparison with the chronological impossibilities that were overcome to make Zaleucus and Charondas Pythagoreans. In fact the use of the Doric dialect was probably intended as further proof of his Pythagoreanism. He had converted not just in thought but even in dialect.

The second feature of the fragments of Hippodamus that fits the pattern of the Pythagorean pseudepigrapha is their attempt to outdo and anticipate Plato. The treatises ascribed to Zaleucus and Charondas do this by claiming to be the preludes to laws that Plato called for in his *Laws*. In the case of Hippodamus this claim to anticipate Plato is seen in the title of the treatise, *On the Republic*. That title can claim some justification from Aristotle's report that Hippodamus wrote on the topic of the best republic but, when Hippodamus is turned into a Pythagorean and the fundamental division of citizens is the same as Plato's, it becomes clear that the title is in fact intended to claim priority in this area for the Pythagoreans. It is important to note that *On the Republic* was not just a standard title for a certain sort of pseudo-Pythagorean treatise, such as *On Virtue*, which appears as the title of three different pseudo-Pythagorean treatises in Thesleff's collection. No other work in Thesleff's collection bears the title *On the Republic*. Hippodamus' work is presented as the Pythagorean prototype for Plato's *Republic*. Aristotle gave no role to the Pythagoreans in the formation of Plato's ideas about the ideal state and instead saw his predecessors as Hippodamus and Phaleas of Chalcedon (*Pol.* 2.4–5). The later Pythagorean tradition overcomes this slight to Pythagoreanism by simply claiming that Hippodamus was a Pythagorean after all.

Delatte expresses surprise that, if Hippodamus' treatise *On the Republic* had this purpose, it does not show any connections to the views of the historical Hippodamus as described by Aristotle (1922a: 159). It is indeed important to note that the Pythagorean Hippodamus has virtually no connection with Hippodamus described by Aristotle. Aristotle's focus is Hippodamus' theory of the ideal republic and he spends a great deal of time describing and criticizing it, having only briefly alluded to his town planning. In Aristotle's account Hippodamus is devoted to threefold divisions; he divides the citizens in his ideal state into soldiers, craftsmen and farmers, the land in the state into sacred, public and private and the law into cases of outrage, damage and homicide (*Pol.* 1267b31–9). At first sight this devotion to triadic structure suggests a clear connection with the Pythagorean Hippodamus, who shares the same predilection. This

apparent connection disappears, however, once it is seen that none of the three-fold divisions overlap between Aristotle’s account and the Pythagorean Hippodamus; most problematic of all, the triadic structures of the two texts are inconsistent in the most important triad. There is no trace of the Pythagorean Hippodamus’ counselor class in Aristotle, while the craftsmen and farmers, who form two separate classes in Aristotle, are part of one class in the Pythagorean Hippodamus, the artisan or mechanical class. None of the names of the three classes are the same in the two texts; the one class that appears to overlap, the soldiers, receives the Platonic title helpers (ἐπικούροι) only in the Pythagorean Hippodamus. It may be that the forger took the idea of triadic divisions from Aristotle’s report, although it might just have arisen from the desire to emulate Plato in the *Republic* and be completely independent of Aristotle. The total lack of overlap between the Pythagorean Hippodamus and Aristotle’s account of Hippodamus both as a town planner and also as a political theorist is the strongest possible evidence that the Pythagorean Hippodamus is a forgery.

Moreover, Delatte’s inference about the nature of the Pythagorean Hippodamus from the lack of similarity with Aristotle’s report is faulty. Delatte assumes that a forger who was trying to claim the famous Hippodamus for the Pythagoreans would have been careful to make that Hippodamus accord with historical information about Hippodamus such as that provided by Aristotle (1922a: 159). Unfortunately there is little evidence for such historically accurate forgeries in the pseudo-Pythagorean tradition and such a conception is in fact in conflict with the main goal of that tradition, which is to claim that the Pythagoreans fully anticipated the ideas of Plato and Aristotle. Aristotle’s reports of fifth-century Pythagoreanism and the genuine fragments of Philolaus portray a Pythagoreanism that makes sense in a fifth-century context. The forgers of works in Philolaus’ name take none of this material up. The forgers are not interested in presenting an appropriately archaic Philolaic Pythagoreanism; their goal was to show that Philolaus was far ahead of his time and had anticipated important Platonic and Aristotelian ideas (Huffman 1993: 17–35). The exact same impulse can be seen in the Pythagorean Hippodamus. The goal is not to forge a text that matches the evidence that Aristotle quotes and criticizes but rather to show that Hippodamus the Pythagorean had anticipated Plato in writing on the ideal state and in making the central triadic division on

which Plato's state was based. The forgery in Hippodamus' name differs from some other forgeries in choosing not to show that Hippodamus had anticipated all the details of Plato's system. Instead it is content to show that Hippodamus anticipated Plato on central matters and then attempts to outdo or go beyond Plato by putting together its own synthesis of fourth-century ideas.

Given this understanding of *On the Republic* by "Hippodamus" it is now time to consider what similarities it shows to the *Pythagorean Precepts* and the significance of those similarities. One of the fragments of "Hippodamus" (Stob. 4.1.95) argues that a man is made good through three things: habits, laws, and words (ἔθεα, νόμοι, λόγοι – Thesleff 1965: 100.24–6). In the discussion of words, the author argues that it is necessary to judge and test the class (γένος) of the sophists to see if they say things that are helpful, since they can cause the greatest harm if they say things that are contrary to the common conceptions of gods and men. The problematic words of the sophists assert that either the divine does not exist or, if it does exist, it is not so disposed to the human race as to oversee and pay attention to it but rather to leave it be and neglect it. If these beliefs are accepted, "every man is filled with anarchy and pushes aside the greatest fear [i.e. fear of the gods]; having become a creature of change and variety he is unruly and acts contrary to the law." The abhorrence of anarchy is similar to the assertion in fragment 2 of the *Precepts* that anarchy is the greatest evil. The fear of what is varied and changeable is similar to the disapproval of the variety of human desires here in fragment 8, although the language is not identical (παντοδαπός in Hippodamus [Thesleff 1965: 102.4], ποικίλος in fr. 8). I have already shown, however, that these concerns are common in texts of the late fifth and fourth centuries (see on the *Prelude* of Zaleucus above and Huffman 2008a) and thus are not evidence for any special connection between "Hippodamus" and fragment 8.

Most similar is the agreement between "Hippodamus" (Thesleff 1965: 101.25–7) and fragment 8, that people must believe both that the gods exist and also that they oversee and pay attention to the human race. As has been shown above in the discussion of Book 10 of Plato's *Laws*, this view is also common in texts of the fifth and fourth centuries. In particular, Xenophon (*Mem.* 1.4) reports a conversation between Socrates and Aristodemus, where Aristodemus takes the position that the gods exist (1.4.10) but do not pay attention to us. Aristoxenus' older

contemporary Heraclides of Pontus, in his *Abaris*, also formulates the issue in a way very similar to “Hippodamus” and fragment 8. The context is very murky, but a divine spirit orders someone “to believe about the gods that they both exist and turn their attention to human affairs” (Schütrumpf, Stork et al. 2008: fr. 132 = Wehrli 1969: fr. 75). The similarity between “Hippodamus” and fragment 8 is thus that they are both addressing an issue commonly recognized in the fourth century. The question is whether they develop that issue in such similar ways as to suggest a relationship of dependence.

The evidence indicates no such similarity but rather independent dealings with a common issue. “Hippodamus” shows some similarities to fragment 8 but even more to Plato’s *Laws*. In describing the gods’ attention to mortals “Hippodamus” uses both ἐπιβλέπειν, which is found in fragment 8 but not in the *Laws*, and φροντίζειν, which is the word used in the *Laws* (e.g., 885b) but not found in fragment 8. The reference to the “class of the sophists” (τὸ τῶν σοφιστῶν γένος) in “Hippodamus” finds an exact parallel in several passages of Plato (*Crat.* 398e σοφιστῶν γένος; *Tim.* 19e τὸ δὲ τῶν σοφιστῶν γένος) and reflects Plato’s preoccupation with the sophists, whereas the sophists appear nowhere in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Similarly, in “Hippodamus” (Thesleff 1965: 102.1) improper beliefs about the gods are said to produce folly (ἄφροσύνην) and injustice (ἄδικίαν) just as in the *Laws*, during the discussion of the value of the belief in the gods in Book 10 (906a–b), injustice (ἄδικία) combines with folly (μετὰ ἀφροσύνης) to destroy us. Hippodamus is thus working in the same general conceptual world as both fragment 8 and Plato’s *Laws*, but it was a world shared with other fourth-century authors such as Xenophon. None of the parallels with the *Pythagorean Precepts* are striking enough to require us to suppose that “Hippodamus” had read them. The connections with Plato are stronger and provide some reason for believing that “Hippodamus” had read Plato, even if he did not generally copy directly from him.

The crucial points of difference between “Hippodamus” and the *Pythagorean Precepts* are in the basic formal features of the two texts. “Hippodamus” presents himself as a famous pre-Platonic author, who is writing the same type of treatise as Plato, a *Republic*, and who anticipates the basic tripartite division of society that Plato presents in the *Republic*. The *Precepts* are presented as the work of Aristoxenus, who was not a Pythagorean, although he had a Pythagorean background, and was clearly

writing after Plato. The natural presumption is that the *Precepts* are derived from the Pythagoreans of the middle of the fourth century, whom Aristoxenus had met. Thus, they appear as contemporaries of Plato, who are dealing with some of the same issues but who are presented neither as the source of Plato's ideas nor as dependent on him. The *Precepts* are in a format that is appropriate for what we know of the Pythagorean way of life and make sense as a development of the earlier *acusmata*. Since Plato never wrote in such a format, Aristoxenus' adoption of this format cannot be intended to show Pythagorean anticipation of Plato as the *Preludes* of Zaleucus and Charondas and the *On the Republic* of Hippodamus do. Plato and the *Pythagorean Precepts* are working with the same general problems and share a similar conservative outlook but are not directly dependent on one another. "Hippodamus" is steeped in this same conceptual world but tries to project that world back onto the fifth-century predecessors of Plato in order to gain glory for the Pythagoreans.

In conclusion then, fragment 8 of the *Precepts* is clearly distinct from the pseudo-Pythagorean treatises ascribed to Zaleucus, Charondas and Hippodamus. Those treatises, in fact, show close ties to Plato's *Laws* and *Republic* by adopting specifically Platonic features of those works of Plato such as the concept of a prelude and Plato's specific division of the citizens into three classes. The *Precepts* are concerned with some of the problems confronted by Plato in the *Laws* and shared with Plato, but also with a number of other fourth-century texts, a focus on the relationship between morality and belief in the gods. The *Precepts* share with Plato and others a common conservative approach to the problem that emphasizes the value of order, but they do not contain any of Plato's specific responses to these problems and present a distinct Pythagorean approach to them that emphasizes the basic hubristic nature of human beings.

Detailed Commentary

Lines 6–7 – τὸ ἀνθρώπινον γένος: See the commentary on fr. 9, line 103.

Line 8 – χρήσιμον: See the commentary on fr. 9, lines 68–9 for this and related words in the *Precepts*.

Line 8 – ὑπελάμβανον: See the commentary on fr. 2, line 1.

Line 9 – δεῖσθαι: This form is frequently used in the *Precepts* with a dependent genitive, showing of what there is need (a total of five times: here, line 14, below and fr. 9, lines 41, 69 and 81). It is found nowhere else in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, except in these five places, which are all likely to come from the *Precepts*. Along with δεῖν it is the most characteristic way in the *Precepts* of stressing what should be done.

Line 9 – ἐπιστατείας: ἐπιστατεία appears only nine times in Greek, and at first sight all the uses seem to be late, so that its use might raise suspicions about whether this passage of Iamblichus really derives from Aristoxenus. Closer examination, however, shows that the word, in fact, provides strong support for Aristoxenian authorship. It appears in Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius* once, twice in Diogenes of Oenoanda, once each in Hesychius and the *Suda*. The other four uses are from Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras* (9) and Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, including the present passage (VP 183, 203, 174). The noteworthy thing is that all three appearances in Iamblichus are in sections that have been identified as coming from Aristoxenus on other grounds, and, most remarkable of all, the one reference in Porphyry (VP 9) comes from a passage where Porphyry explicitly mentions Aristoxenus as his source. Aristoxenus says that Pythagoras left Samos for Italy because the tyranny of Polycrates was so extreme that it was not proper for a free man to endure "his supervision and despotism" (τὴν ἐπιστατείαν τε καὶ δεσποτείαν). It is far from clear to what extent this report follows the actual language used by Aristoxenus, but it is not implausible that at least some of his language is reflected in Porphyry's report, particularly here, where the central point of the report is made, i.e. that a free man cannot endure the supervision and despotism of a tyrant. Since the word is used nowhere else in Iamblichus' writings than these three passages, which are likely to come from Aristoxenus and since Porphyry identifies Aristoxenus as the source for a passage, which is the sole use of the word in his corpus, it seems very unlikely that the word was supplied by Iamblichus and very likely that the word is to be ascribed to Aristoxenus. Since three of the uses come from passages likely to be from the *Pythagorean Precepts*, it seems plausible that the usage is in fact Pythagorean and was taken over by Aristoxenus. The concept of supervision (ἐπιστατεία) is central to the Pythagoreans because of their belief that human beings are by nature hubristic.

Line 12 – ὕβριστικόν: See the discussion of ὕβρις in the section on the content of the fragment above.

Line 12 – τὸ ζῷον: This word is used where we might have expected ἄνθρωπος in two crucial passages in the *Precepts*, here and in fragment 9, line 45, where τὸ ζῷον is said to easily degenerate into vice if it is neglected. It is best translated “animal” indicating the realm of animals including human beings. It does not include plants, as can be seen in fragment 4 where φυτὸν and ζῷον clearly pick out the distinct classes plants and animals. Human beings appear to be generally included among the ζῷα in the *Precepts*. In fragment 9 at line 56 there is reference to “the rest of animals” (τῶν λοιπῶν ζῴων) in contrast to human beings, which thus implies that humans are included among the animals. There is also a comparison between the rearing of humans and the rearing of animals (fr. 9, lines 160–176). The use of τὸ ζῷον both here and in fragment 9, line 45 seems clearly intended to draw attention to the close affinity of human beings with animals and in particular to suggest that human beings share certain regrettable traits with animals, such as a nature that is *hubristic* and prone to degenerate into bad behavior without proper supervision.

Line 13 – ποικίλον: This adjective and its cognate noun have a prominent role in the *Pythagorean Precepts*, appearing seven times. The adjective is used here in a crucial passage describing basic human nature, but the adjective and noun also appear in the Pythagorean account of desire in fragment 3 (line 1) and fragment 9 (lines 77, 87, 103 and 105) and finally in the Pythagorean account of appropriateness in fragment 10 (line 22). The adjective indicates that something is complex and varied. When someone expresses puzzlement at a question, it is common for the interlocutor to say that he is not asking anything ποικίλον, anything “complicated” (e.g., Pl. *Cra.* 393d and *Tim.* 59c). What is ποικίλος is frequently the opposite of what is simple (ἁπλοῦς – Pl. *Tht.* 146d; *Symp.* 182b). In other cases the emphasis is on variety. In one passage the word is used of wood that is “varied” both in size and type (Pl. *Criti.* 118b); it picks out what is varied in quality as opposed to what is multiple in number (Pl. *Leg.* 704e). The associated noun can refer to embroidery as an art (Pl. *Resp.* 401a), which is precisely an art that adds variety and complexity to something. Sometimes it has overtones of what is elegant or elaborate because of its complex variety (Pl. *Ion* 535d, *Soph.* 223c).

It can have a positive connotation in reference to natural objects that have a beautiful variety of colors or objects of art that are intricately worked. Thus it can refer to a dappled fawn skin (Eur. *Bacch.* 249), to many-colored birds (Plot. 4.4.29), to cloth woven and embroidered in various colors (Hom. *Il.* 5. 735) or to metalwork that is cunningly wrought (Hom. *Il.* 16. 134). One of the stoas in Athens was known as ἡ ποικίλη στοά because it was painted with an intricate variety of colored scenes (Dem. 45.17). Plato uses the related noun to refer to the intricate, and varied pattern of the beautiful night sky (*Resp.* 529d). When

applied to the character of animals or men the connotation is more mixed, suggesting cleverness but also deception. The character, as opposed to the appearance, of a fox is described as ποικίλος, which suggests subtlety and complexity rather than what is straightforward (Pl. *Resp.* 365c; Plut. 500c–d). The adjective is applied to both Prometheus (Hes. *Th.* 511; Aesch. *PV.* 310) and Odysseus (Eur. *IA* 526) as wily and subtle individuals. Finally, the adjective could have negative connotations emphasizing a chaotic and disordered variety that is unstable and subject to constant change. Thus Plato describes the democratic government, while beautiful, as “anarchic and motley” (ἄναρχος καὶ ποικίλη – *Resp.* 558c, tr. Shorey). At *Republic* 588c7, the appetitive part of the soul is likened to a beast of great variety (ποικίλου) with many heads, while at 580d Plato makes the point that it is hard to come up with a name for this part of the soul because it has many forms (διὰ πολυειδίαν). Aristotle uses *poikilos* a number of times in his biological works in a purely descriptive way (e.g., of a spotted leopard, *GA* 785b21) but only once in his ethical works, where, however, it has a decidedly negative connotation of “instability.” He (*EN* 1101a8) says of the happy man that he will not be “variable and easy to change” (ποικίλος γὰρ καὶ εὐμετάβολος).

Since ποικίλος is paired with ὕβριστικόν in the *Precepts*, there can be no doubt that it has a negative connotation similar to that found in Plato and Aristotle. As the context shows it must refer to a complex variety and variability, on which it is difficult to impose order (τάξις). On the other hand, there is no reason to assume that Aristoxenus derived this view of what is ποικίλος or its application to human beings and their desires from Plato or Aristotle and ascribed it to the Pythagoreans. The adjective ποικίλος is quite common in gnomic passages in early poetry, including tragedy. Authors of the late fifth century and even earlier used ποικίλος negatively to characterize human beings. Theognis claims that all men have crafty thoughts (ποικίλα), although not all act on them (221–6), and complains of a friend who did, describing him as having a cunning (ποικίλον) serpent in his bosom. Most significantly it is applied to emotion and desire by late fifth-century authors. Euripides describes sexual desire, Aphrodite, as full of complex variety (πόλλ’ ἔνεστι ποικίλα), bringing humans the greatest delights along with the greatest pains (fr. 26). Democritus applies the adjective broadly to all human emotions and presents it in a totally negative light, saying that if you open yourself up, “you will find a treasury and storehouse of evils, which has a complex variability and is subject to many passions” (fr. 149 – ποικίλον τι καὶ πολυπαθὲς κακῶν ταμιεῖον εὐρήσεις καὶ θησαύρισμα).

Plato and the Pythagoreans are thus both developing a tradition in which human ποικιλία (complexity and variability in both intellect and emotion) is viewed as at best a mixed blessing. In the *Republic* Plato draws a strong contrast between this human complexity and the ideal citizen of his *Republic*. One of

Plato's central points is that each of his citizens should be one and simple rather than many and complex. At 397e he says that "there is no two-fold or manifold man among us, since each one does one thing." If a man who could take on every sort of form should come among them, a manifold man, he would be sent away. The education of the guardians accordingly is designed to produce citizens that are unified and straightforward rather than many and complex. The guardians should not be exposed to a variety of musical modes but only two and they should not pursue rhythms that are complex (ποικίλους) or have too much variety (399c). He summarizes the basic principles of education in music and gymnastic (404e) by asserting that complexity (ποικιλία) in music engenders licentiousness in the listener, while complexity in physical training produces disease in the body. On the other hand simplicity (ἀπλότης) in music begets sobriety in the soul and simplicity in physical training begets health. Plato's contrast between complexity and simplicity here is all based on two related prominent principles in the *Republic*: 1) justice, the central focus of the *Republic*, arises in the state when each person does just one thing, what he is best suited to do (433b), and arises in the individual when each of the parts of his soul does one thing, i.e. what it is best suited to do (441e); 2) the highest good for the state as a whole and for each individual, that for which it should strive above all, is unity (462a). Given these two basic principles it is obvious that ποικιλία, with its complexity and variety, is going to be the central vice.

The Pythagoreans also see the dangers of ποικιλία, but in the *Precepts* they develop this point in their own way without any trace of the central Platonic principles. Nothing is said about the necessity of each person doing only that for which they are best suited. Nor is there any emphasis on the unity of the parts of soul of the individual. Similarly and surprisingly, given that these are Pythagoreans, there is no mention of the use of music in education and hence no mention of the dangers of complex music. The Pythagorean presentation of ποικιλία is in some ways antithetical to that of Plato. Plato argues that human beings do have a natural unity of the parts of the soul, which needs to be fostered by proper education. The Pythagoreans see the natural human state as that of ποικιλία, complexity and variety. Human beings are by nature prone to excess and our desires naturally know no limit. Thus, the emphasis in the *Precepts* is on the need for supervision of human beings, first of all by the gods and secondly by parents and ancestral customs.

Plato is not alone in criticizing complexity (ποικιλία) in music. This was a common complaint about the New Music of the fourth century (Power 2012: 139). Indeed, Aristoxenus himself complained of the excessive complexity of the music of Philoxenus and Timotheus (fr. 76). Since ποικιλία is such a negative term in the *Precepts*, it is possible that Aristoxenus was influenced by his Pythagorean teachers so as to be suspicious of complexity in music. However,

since we have no explicit evidence for Pythagorean hostility to complexity in music either in the *Precepts* or elsewhere, it seems more likely that Aristoxenus developed this criticism on his own or is perhaps following Plato's lead. Aristoxenus is often thought to be hostile to Plato, but he appears to have been influenced by Plato's treatment of several aspects of music (Barker 2012).

Lines 13–14 – **κατά τε τὰς ὁρμάς καὶ κατά τὰς ἐπιθυμίας καὶ κατά τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν παθῶν**: For the Pythagorean conception of ἐπιθυμία and ὁρμή see fragment 3 and the commentary on lines 3–4 of that fragment.

Line 15 – **ἐπανατάσεως**: In context the word needs to mean “threatening” and the earliest parallel for this use is in Philo. The word is, however, not very common at any period, with only twenty or so uses in all of Greek. The word does appear in Aristotle, however, in its basic sense of “raising.” At *Politics* 1285b12 it is used of “the raising” of the scepter that accompanied the taking of an oath. The meaning “threat” is a metaphorical usage, which appears to arise from the idea of “raising the whip.” In several cases Philo pairs the word with ἀπειλή, which refers to a verbal threat, to produce the phrase “with threatening gestures and speeches” (ἐπανατάσεις καὶ ἀπειλὰς – *Quod Deus* 64.2). Since the word does appear in Aristotle and is not very common, it is not implausible that it had already received its metaphorical sense of threat by the time of Aristoxenus, but is not represented elsewhere in the early tradition because of the vagaries of what has survived of ancient texts.

Line 16 – **σωφρονισμός**: The earliest securely dateable uses (the word is used in Aesop, where dating is very insecure) of this word outside of this passage come from the first centuries BC and AD (Philo uses it several times). It could thus be taken as a sign of late authorship, although one could also suppose that an original fourth-century text has here been corrupted in transmission with the later word replacing σωφροσύνη, which would have been the usual word to use in the fourth century. It is interesting to note, however, that the word is used in Strabo 1.2.3, which Wehrli prints as fragment 123 of Aristoxenus. It does not appear that Strabo is actually quoting Aristoxenus here, so it is not certain that it is his word, but it is at least possible that Strabo uses it in his paraphrase, because he found it in the original text of Aristoxenus. Thus, fragment 123 provides some support for the idea that in fragment 8 as well the word reflects Aristoxenus' own usage.

Line 16 – **τάξις**: The concept of order (τάξις) is prominent throughout the *Precepts*. The word appears a total of six times in addition to this passage (fr. 2: 17; fr. 9: 32, 49, 55; fr. 11: 11, 35). Here in fragment 8 it is clear that one of the central goals of the Pythagorean way of life is to replace our natural hubris and disordered variety of desires with the establishment of self-control and order.

In fragment 2 the Pythagoreans assert that there is no greater evil than anarchy and accordingly praise order. In fragment 9, the young are presented as particularly adverse to and hence in need of such order. It is stressed in fragment 11 (line 35) that even friendships should not arise without plan but rather with proper order.

Line 17 – **ποικιλίαν**: See on ποικίλον in line 13 above.

Line 20 – **ἀγωγήν**: The best translation in this context is “way of life” or “conduct (of life).” Thus, in the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle says that virtue, wisdom and pleasure are the key factors related to the ἀγωγήν εὐδαιμονικήν, “the happy way of life” (1215a32). See also *Pol.* 1292b14, where Aristotle argues that in some places, although the constitution is not democratic, nevertheless, owing to custom (ἥθος) and the way life is conducted (ἀγωγήν), it is administered democratically. Here in fragment 8 the crucial point is that the gods closely watch and pay attention to the way human beings conduct their lives. The word also appears with the meaning “education” in fragment 9, line 19. See the commentary *ad loc.*

Lines 20–1 – **μετὰ δὲ τὸ θεῖόν τε καὶ τὸ δαιμόνιον πλεῖστον ποιεῖσθαι λόγον γονέων τε καὶ νόμου**: It was a very common belief in Greece that we should first of all honor the gods and then our parents and the list of those we should honor is expanded in various ways. Xenophon presents Socrates and Hippias as agreeing that we should honor the gods first and then our parents (*Mem.* 4.4.19) and Theophrastus concurs (fr. 523 FHSG). At *Laws* 717a–b Plato calls for us to worship in order, gods, *daimones*, heroes and parents. Pseudo-Zaleucus expands on this formulation calling for honoring gods, *daimones*, heroes, parents, laws and rulers (Thesleff 1965: 227.23–5). Aeschylus’ *Suppliants* gives a different list: strangers, gods and parents. While Euripides (fr. 853) provides the closest parallel for the order here in the *Precepts*: gods, parents, and laws.

Line 21: For the expression ποιεῖσθαι λόγον see Herodotus 7. 156.

Lines 21–2 – **καὶ τούτων ὑπήκοον αὐτὸν κατασκευάζειν**: This is Iamblichus’ rewriting of ἐαυτὸν πρὸς ταῦτα παρασκευάζοντα, which is shown to be the original text of the *Precepts* by fragment 1, which is derived from Stobaeus. Iamblichus seems to prefer to use the verb κατασκευάζω rather than παρασκευάζω. See the commentary on line 79 of fragment 9.

Line 22 – **πλαστῶς**: This adverb is rather rare in Greek. The earliest uses are this use in Aristoxenus and four passages in Plato. It does not appear to be used by other fourth-century writers. Rivaud implies that Aristoxenus is dependent on Plato (1932: 785), but there is no convincing evidence for this conclusion.

Certainly, other than the simple use of the adverb, there is nothing in Aristoxenus that suggests a connection to the parallel passages in Plato. Aristoxenus contrasts πλαστῶς, “in a counterfeit way,” with πεπεισμένως, “out of conviction.” None of the Platonic passages make this contrast, but instead contrast πλαστῶς with “really,” ὄντως (*Soph.* 216c, *Leg.* 777d) and “truly,” ἀληθῶς (*Leg.* 642d). Nor are any of the contexts in Plato closely parallel to the context in Aristoxenus.

Line 23 – πεπεισμένως: Stobaeus reads πεπιστευμένως rather than Iamblichus’ πεπεισμένως. The adverb πεπιστευμένως is rare, occurring only three times outside of this passage of Aristoxenus according to a full-corpus search of the TLG. The other uses are in the later Christian authors Origen, Cyril and Eusebius. In the passive the verb means “to be trusted or believed” so the adverb should mean “in a trustworthy way” or “in a way that is to be believed” (cf. Eusebius, *Generalis elementaria introductio* = *Eclogae propheticae* 33.16). The adverb πεπεισμένως is almost as rare, appearing just nine times outside of this passage including two uses in Diogenes Laertius and one in Ptolemy and another six in later Christian authors. In the passive the verb means “to be persuaded” or “to believe” so that the adverb means “on the basis of persuasion or belief,” “out of conviction,” or “confidently” (cf. Ptol. *Alm.* 1.1.103.13). It is very hard to be sure which reading to prefer. The point of the *Precepts* seems to be that one should not pay attention to parents and the laws in a counterfeit way but rather genuinely. It would appear that πεπεισμένως would work better for this meaning, since it could be interpreted to mean that one is acting “out of conviction,” i.e. because one has been persuaded of the truth of something. On the other hand, πεπιστευμένως would emphasize that one was acting in a way that others would trust or believe, which does not make quite the appropriate contrast with πλαστῶς, since one could act in a way that others trust but in reality be acting πλαστῶς, “in a counterfeit way.”

Line 27 – μικρῶ: This is the reading of all manuscripts of both Iamblichus and Stobaeus and was followed by earlier scholars such as Nauck, Diels (DK 1.469.17), Delatte and Wachsmuth. Deubner, in his edition of Iamblichus VP, emends the text to μακρῶ citing a passage of Diodorus, which says of the early Greek lawgiver Charondas that “he ordered obedience to the law in every circumstance, even if it had been altogether wrongly (παντελῶς κακῶς) conceived” (12.16.3, tr. after Oldfather 1946). Wehrli followed Deubner and introduced the change into both fragment 8, which is derived from this passage of Iamblichus, and his fragment 34, which was drawn from Stobaeus. Minar (1942: 101, n.22) rejected Deubner’s emendation and Burkert agreed that Iamblichus and Stobaeus probably wrote μικρῶ but wondered whether an author as aggressive as Aristoxenus might not have written μακρῶ (1965: 24). More recent

scholars such as Dillon and Hershbell (1991: 187) and Staab (2002: 385, n. 946), citing Camassa's article (1976–7), have returned to the manuscript text, and that is the best policy for several reasons.

It is more unusual and paradoxical to say that we should adhere to the customs of our fathers even if they are much (μακρῶς) worse than those of others. Thus, to assert that we should follow them if they are a little (μικρῶς) worse but no farther may seem rather flat. Nonetheless, precisely because μακρῶς produces the rhetorically expected paradoxical point, it is the *lectio facilior*. The *Pythagorean Precepts* do not abound in paradox, and it is perfectly plausible that the Pythagoreans made the more commonsensical point that, while of course we should change our laws, if they are radically deficient, if there are only small problems, it is better to stay with the tradition than challenge tradition for very little gain. Since the manuscript reading produces a very reasonable sense and may even be the *lectio difficilior*, there does not seem to be adequate reason to emend it.

The parallel texts adduced also support the manuscript reading. The passage from Diodorus cited by Deubner does not in fact support his emendation. Fragment 8 is concerned with whether citizens should keep (μένειν) the laws they have or try to change them. In Diodorus, on the other hand, the issue is initially not whether citizens should try to change the law but whether they should obey (πείθεσθαι) it, as long as it exists. According to Diodorus, Charondas commanded that citizens obey the law, “even if it had been altogether wrongly conceived” (tr. Oldfather), but Diodorus immediately adds that he allowed that laws in need of correction be corrected. Thus, Brisson and Segonds are wrong to say that Charondas “défendait absolument de modifier les lois” (1996: 199), since he here clearly allows for modification of laws. Later it turns out that anyone proposing correction had to put his neck in a noose as he did so, which led to changes only in cases where the law was seriously defective. In the end, however, Diodorus' description of Charondas' laws in fact agrees with the manuscript text of fragment 8; laws were not changed, if they were only a little worse, but were changed, if they were a great deal worse. Moreover, as Camassa has emphasized (1976–7), Aristotle reports that certain people, whom he does not name (τινες), have raised the question as to whether it is advantageous to change a law, if a better one is available (*Pol.* 1268b26–8). It seems quite plausible that Aristotle is here referring precisely to the Pythagoreans. Moreover, one of the positions outlined in the following discussion matches that of fragment 8: whenever the improvement is small (μικρόν), the mistakes of lawgivers and rulers should be allowed to stand (1269a14–17). Thus, the parallel from Aristotle shows that the position ascribed to the Pythagoreans on the manuscript reading of fragment 8 is perfectly intelligible in the context of fourth-century thought.

Line 29 – καινοτομίας: “Innovation” is clearly a negative term here in accordance with the Pythagorean emphasis on adhering to ancestral tradition so as to preserve order. In his critique of the New Music of Philoxenus and Timotheus, Aristoxenus similarly treats καινοτομία as a negative term by associating it with complexity (ποικιλία). See the note on ποικίλον in line 13 above and Power 2012: 148–151.

Line 29 – σωτήριον: For the Pythagorean concept of “safety” see the commentary on fragment 2, line 2.

20 | Fragment 9: On Opinion, the Training
of Children and Young People, Pleasure,
Desire, Diet, and the Generation of Children
(38 W)

Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, 200–13. For lines 48–51 cf. Stobaeus, 4.1.49 (fr. 2), for lines 71–9 cf. Stobaeus, 3.10.66 (fr. 3), for lines 124–38 and 153–8 cf. Stobaeus, 4.37.4 (fr. 4).

(200.) περὶ δὲ δόξης τάδε φασὶ λέγειν αὐτούς. ἀνόητον μὲν εἶναι 1
καὶ τὸ πάση καὶ παντὸς δόξῃ προσέχειν, καὶ μάλιστα τὸ τῇ 2
παρὰ τῶν πολλῶν γινομένη· τὸ γὰρ καλῶς ὑπολαμβάνειν τε καὶ 3
δοξάζειν ὀλίγοις ὑπάρχειν. [δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι περὶ τοὺς εἰδότας 4
τοῦτο γίνεσθαι· οὗτοι δὲ εἰσιν ὀλίγοι. ὥστε δῆλον ὅτι οὐκ ἂν 5
διατείνου εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἢ τοιαύτη δύναμις.] ἀνόητον δ' εἶναι 6
καὶ πάσης ὑπολήψεώς τε καὶ δόξης καταφρονεῖν· [συμβήσεται 7
γὰρ ἀμαθῆ τε καὶ ἀνεπανόρθωτον εἶναι τὸν οὕτω διακείμενον.] 8
ἀναγκαῖον δ' εἶναι τῷ μὲν ἀνεπιστήμονι μαθάνειν ἅ ταυχάνει 9
ἀγνοῶν τε καὶ οὐκ ἐπιστάμενος, τῷ δὲ μαθάνοντι προσέχειν τῇ 10
τοῦ ἐπισταμένου τε καὶ διδάξαι δυναμένου ὑπολήψει τε 11
(201.) καὶ δόξῃ, καθόλου δ' εἰπεῖν ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι τοὺς 12
σωθησομένους τῶν νέων προσέχειν ταῖς τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τε 13
καὶ καλῶς βεβιωκότων ὑπολήψεσί τε καὶ δόξαις. ἐν δὲ τῷ 14
ἀνθρωπίνῳ βίῳ τῷ σύμπαντι εἶναι τινὰς ἡλικίας ἐνδεδασμένας, 15
οὕτω γὰρ καὶ λέγειν αὐτοὺς φασιν, ἃς οὐκ εἶναι τοῦ ταχόντος 16
πρὸς ἀλλήλας συνεῖραι· ἐκκρούεσθαι γὰρ αὐτὰς ὑπ' ἀλλήλων, 17
ἐάν τις μὴ καλῶς τε καὶ ὀρθῶς ἄγῃ τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐκ γενετῆς. 18
δεῖν οὖν τῆς τοῦ παιδὸς ἀγωγῆς καλῆς τε καὶ σώφρονος 19
γινομένης καὶ ἀνδρικῆς πολὺ εἶναι μέρος τὸ παραδιδόμενον εἰς 20
τὴν τοῦ νεανίσκου ἡλικίαν, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τῆς τοῦ νεανίσκου 21
ἐπιμελείας τε καὶ ἀγωγῆς καλῆς τε καὶ ἀνδρικῆς καὶ σώφρονος 22
γινομένης πολὺ εἶναι μέρος <τὸ> παραδιδόμενον εἰς τὴν τοῦ 23
ἀνδρὸς ἡλικίαν, ἐπεὶ περ εἷς γε τοὺς πολλοὺς ἄτοπὸν τε καὶ 24
γελοῖον (202.) εἶναι τὸ συμβαῖνον. παῖδας μὲν γὰρ ὄντας 25
οἶεσθαι δεῖν εὐτακτεῖν τε καὶ σωφρονεῖν καὶ ἀπέχεσθαι 26
πάντων τῶν φορτικῶν τε καὶ ἀσχημόνων εἶναι δοκούντων, 27

νεανίσκους δὲ γενομένους ἀφεῖσθαι παρά γε δὴ τοῖς πολλοῖς 28
 ποιεῖν ὃ τι ἂν βούλωνται. συρρεῖν δὲ σχεδὸν εἰς ταύτην τὴν 29
 ἡλικίαν ἀμφοτέρω τὰ γένη τῶν ἀμαρτημάτων· καὶ γὰρ 30
 παιδαριώδη πολλὰ καὶ ἀνδρώδη τοὺς νεανίσκους ἀμαρτάνειν. 31
 τὸ μὲν γὰρ φεύγειν ἅπαν τὸ τῆς σπουδῆς τε καὶ τάξεως γένος, 32
 ὥς ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν, διώκειν δὲ τὸ τῆς παιγνίας τε καὶ ἀκολασίας 33
 καὶ ὕβρεως τῆς παιδικῆς εἶδος, τῆς τοῦ παιδὸς ἡλικίας 34
 οἰκειότατον εἶναι· ἐκ ταύτης οὖν εἰς τὴν ἐχομένην ἡλικίαν 35
 ἀφικνεῖσθαι τὴν τοιαύτην διάθεσιν. τὸ δὲ τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν τῶν 36
 ἰσχυρῶν, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ τὸ τῶν φιλοτιμιῶν γένος, ὁμοίως δὲ 37
 καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς ὁρμὰς τε καὶ διαθέσεις, ὅσαι τυγχάνουσιν οὕσαι 38
 τοῦ χαλεποῦ τε καὶ θορυβώδους γένους, ἐκ τῆς τοῦ ἀνδρὸς 39
 ἡλικίας εἰς τὴν τῶν νεανίσκων ἀφικνεῖσθαι. διόπερ πασῶν 40
 δεῖσθαι τῶν (203.) ἡλικιῶν ταύτην πλείστης ἐπιμελείας. 41
 καθόλου δ' εἰπεῖν οὐδέποτε τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐατέον εἶναι ποιεῖν 42
 ὃ τι ἂν βούληται, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ τινα ἐπιστατεῖαν ὑπάρχειν δεῖν καὶ 43
 ἀρχὴν νόμιμόν τε καὶ εὐσχήμονα, [ἧς ὑπήκοος ἔσται ἕκαστος 44
 τῶν πολιτῶν·] ταχέως γὰρ ἐξίστασθαι τὸ ζῶον ἐαθὲν τε καὶ 45
 ὀλιγωρηθὲν εἰς κακίαν τε καὶ φαυλότητα. ἐρωτᾶν τε καὶ 46
 διαπορεῖν πολλάκις αὐτοὺς ἔφασαν, τίνος ἔνεκα τοὺς παῖδας 47
 συνεθίζομεν **προσφέρεσθαι τὴν τροφὴν τεταγμένως** τε καὶ 48
 συμμετρως, καὶ **τὴν μὲν τάξιν καὶ τὴν συμμετρίαν** 49
 ἀποφαίνομεν αὐτοῖς **καλά**, τὰ δὲ τούτων ἐναντία, **τὴν τε** 50
ἀταξίαν καὶ τὴν ἀσυμμετρίαν, αἰσχροῖ, [ὃ καὶ ἔστιν ὃ τε 51
 οἰνόφλυξ καὶ ἄπληστος ἐν μεγάλῳ ὀνειδίζει κείμενος.] εἰ γὰρ 52
 μηδὲν τούτων ἔστι χρήσιμον εἰς τὴν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἡλικίαν 53
 ἀφικνουμένων ἡμῶν, μάταιον εἶναι τὸ συνεθίζειν παῖδας ὄντας 54
 τῇ τοιαύτῃ τάξει· [τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ λόγον εἶναι καὶ περὶ τῶν 55
 (204.) ἄλλων ἐθνῶν.] οὐκ οὖν ἐπὶ γε τῶν λοιπῶν ζώων τοῦτο 56
 ὁρᾶσθαι συμβαίνειν, ὅσα ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων παιδεύεται, ἀλλ' εὐθύς 57
 ἐξ ἀρχῆς τὸν τε σκύλακα καὶ τὸν πῶλον ταῦτα συνεθίζεσθαι τε 58
 καὶ μαρτάνειν, ἃ δεήσει πράττειν αὐτοὺς τελεωθέντας. καθόλου 59
 δὲ [τοὺς Πυθαγορείους ἔφασαν] παρακελεύεσθαι [τοῖς 60
 ἐντυγχάνουσι τε καὶ ἀφικνουμένοις εἰς συνήθειαν] εὐλαβεῖσθαι 61
 τὴν ἡδονήν, [εἴπερ τι καὶ ἄλλο τῶν εὐλαβείας δεομένων·] οὐθὲν 62
 γὰρ οὕτω σφάλλιν ἡμᾶς οὐδ' ἐμβάλλειν εἰς ἀμαρτίαν ὥς τοῦτο 63
 τὸ πάθος. καθόλου δέ, [ὥς ἔοικε, διετείνοντο] μηδέποτε μηδὲν 64

πράττειν ἡδονῆς στοχαζομένους καὶ γὰρ ἀσχήμονα καὶ 65
βλαβερὸν ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ τοῦτον εἶναι τὸν σκοπόν, ἀλλὰ 66
μάλιστα μὲν πρὸς τὸ καλὸν τε καὶ εὐσχημον βλέποντας 67
πράττειν ὃ ἂν ᾗ πρακτέον, δεύτερον δὲ πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον τε 68
καὶ ὠφέλιμον, δεῖσθαι τε ταῦτα κρίσεως οὐ τῆς τυχούσης. 69

70

(205.) περὶ δὲ [τῆς σωματικῆς ὀνομαζομένης] ἐπιθυμίας τοιαῦτα 71
λέγειν [ἔφασαν τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐκείνους.] αὐτὴν μὲν τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν 72
ἐπιφορὰν τινα εἶναι τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ ὀρμῆν καὶ ὀρεξιν ἣτοι 73
πληρώσεως [τινος] ἢ παρουσίας τινῶν αἰσθήσεως [ἢ 74
διαθέσεως αἰσθητικῆς. γίνεσθαι δὲ καὶ τῶν ἐναντίων ἐπιθυμίαν, 75
οἶον] κενώσεώς τε καὶ ἀπουσίας καὶ τοῦ μὴ αἰσθάνεσθαι 76
[ἐνίων.] ποικίλον δ' εἶναι τὸ πάθος τοῦτο [καὶ σχεδὸν τῶν 77
περὶ ἄνθρωπον] πολυειδέστατον. [εἶναι δὲ τὰς πολλὰς τῶν 78
ἀνθρωπίνων] ἐπιθυμιῶν ἐπικτήτους [τε καὶ κατεσκευασμένας 79
ὑπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἀνθρώπων,] διὸ δὴ καὶ πλείστης ἐπιμελείας 80
δεῖσθαι τὸ πάθος τοῦτο καὶ φυλακῆς τε καὶ σωμασκίας οὐ τῆς 81
τυχούσης. τὸ μὲν γὰρ κενωθέντος τοῦ σώματος τῆς τροφῆς 82
ἐπιθυμεῖν φυσικὸν εἶναι, καὶ τὸ πάλιν ἀναπληρωθέντος 83
κενώσεως ἐπιθυμεῖν τῆς προσηκούσης φυσικὸν καὶ τοῦτ' 84
εἶναι· τὸ δὲ ἐπιθυμεῖν περιέργου τροφῆς ἢ περιέργου τε καὶ 85
τρυφερᾶς ἐσθιῆτός τε καὶ στρωμνῆς ἢ περιέργου τε καὶ 86
πολυτελοῦς καὶ ποικίλης οἰκίσεως ἐπικτήτων εἶναι. [τὸν αὐτὸν 87
δὴ λόγον εἶναι καὶ περὶ σκευῶν τε καὶ ποτηρίων καὶ διακόνων καὶ 88
θρεμμάτων τῶν εἰς τροφήν ἀνηκόντων.] 89

90

(206.) καθόλου δὲ [τῶν περὶ ἄνθρωπον παθῶν σχεδὸν] τοῦτο 91
μάλιστα τοιοῦτον εἶναι οἶον μηδαμοῦ ἵστασθαι, ἀλλὰ προάγειν 92
εἰς ἄπειρον. διόπερ εὐθύς ἐκ νεότητος ἐπιμελητέον εἶναι τῶν 93
ἀναφυομένων, ὅπως ἐπιθυμήσουσι μὲν ὧν δεῖ, φεύγονται δὲ 94
τῶν ματαίων τε καὶ περιέργων ἐπιθυμιῶν, ἀτάρακτοί τε καὶ 95
καθαροὶ τῶν τοιούτων ὀρέξεων ὄντες καὶ καταφρονοῦντες 96
αὐτῶν τε τῶν ἀξιοκαταφρονήτων καὶ τῶν ἐνδεδεμένων ἐν ταῖς 97
ἐπιθυμίαις. μάλιστα δ' εἶναι κατανοῆσαι τὰς τε ματαίους καὶ τὰς 98
βλαβερὰς καὶ τὰς περιέργους καὶ τὰς ὑβριστικὰς τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν 99
παρὰ τῶν ἐν ἐξουσίαις ἀναστρεφομένων γινομένας· οὐδὲν γὰρ 100
οὕτως ἄτοπον εἶναι, ἐφ' ὃ τὴν ψυχὴν οὐχ ὀρμαῖν τῶν (207.) 101

τοιούτων παίδων τε καὶ ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικῶν. καθόλου δὲ 102
 ποικιλώτατον εἶναι τὸ ἀνθρώπινον γένος κατὰ τὸ τῶν 103
 ἐπιθυμιῶν πλῆθος. σημεῖον δὲ ἐναργὲς εἶναι τὴν τῶν 104
 προσφερομένων ποικιλίαν· ἀπέραντον μὲν γάρ τι πλῆθος εἶναι 105
 καρπῶν, ἀπέραντον δὲ ῥιζῶν, ᾧ χρῆται τὸ ἀνθρώπινον γένος. 106
 ἔτι δὲ σαρκοφαγίᾳ παντοδαπῇ χρῆσθαι, καὶ ἔργον εἶναι εὐρεῖν, 107
 τίνος οὐ γέυεται τῶν τε χερσαίων καὶ τῶν πτηνῶν καὶ τῶν 108
 ἐνύδρων ζώων· καὶ δὴ σκευασίας παντοδαπᾶς περὶ ταῦτα 109
 μεμηχανῆσθαι καὶ χυμῶν παντοίας μίξεις. ὅθεν εἰκότως μανικόν 110
 τε καὶ πολύμορφον εἶναι κατὰ τὴν (208.) τῆς ψυχῆς κίνησιν τὸ 111
 ἀνθρώπινον φύλον· ἕκαστον γὰρ δὴ τῶν προσφερομένων ἰδίου 112
 τινὸς διαθέσεως αἴτιον γίνεσθαι. ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους τὰ μὲν 113
 παραχρῆμα μεγάλης ἀλλοιώσεως αἰτία γενόμενα συνορᾶν, οἷον 114
 καὶ τὸν οἶνον, ὅτι πλείων προσενεχθεὶς μέχρι μὲν τινος 115
 ἱλαρωτέρους ποιεῖ, ἔπειτα μανικωτέρους καὶ 116
 ἀσχημονεστέρους· [τὰ δὲ μὴ τοιαύτην ἐνδεικνύμενα δύναμιν 117
 ἀγνοεῖν. γίνεσθαι δὲ πᾶν τὸ προσενεχθὲν αἰτιὸν τινος ἰδίου 118
 διαθέσεως.] διὸ δὴ καὶ μεγάλης σοφίας τὸ κατανοῆσαι τε καὶ 119
 συνιδεῖν, ποίοις τε καὶ πόσοις δεῖ χρῆσθαι πρὸς τὴν τροφήν. 120
 [εἶναι δὲ ταύτην τὴν ἐπιστήμην τὸ μὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς Ἀπόλλωνός τε 121
 καὶ Παιῶνος, ὕστερον δὲ τῶν περὶ Ἀσκληπιόν.] 122

(209.) περὶ δὲ γεννήσεως τάδε λέγειν αὐτοὺς ἔφασαν. καθόλου 124
 μὲν ᾧοντο δεῖν φυλάττεσθαι τὸ καλούμενον προφερές (οὔτε 125
 γὰρ τῶν φυτῶν τὰ προφερῆ οὔτε τῶν ζώων εὐκαρπα 126
 γίνεσθαι), <ἀλλὰ δεῖν γενέσθαι> τινὰ χρόνον πρὸ τῆς 127
 καρποφορίας, ὅπως ἐξ ἰσχυόντων τε καὶ τετελειωμένων τῶν 128
 σωμάτων τὰ σπέρματα καὶ οἱ καρποὶ γίνωνται. δεῖν οὖν τοὺς 129
 τε παῖδας καὶ τὰς παρθένους ἐν πόνοις τε καὶ γυμνασίοις καὶ 130
 καρτερίαις ταῖς προσηκούσαις τρέφειν, τροφήν προσφέροντας 131
 τὴν ἀρμόττουσαν φιλοπόνῳ τε καὶ σώφρονι καὶ καρτερικῷ βίῳ. 132
 πολλὰ δὲ τῶν κατὰ τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον τοιαῦτα εἶναι ἐν οἷς 133
 βέλτιον ἐστίν ἢ ὀψιμάθεια· ὧν εἶναι καὶ τὴν (210.) τῶν 134
 ἀφροδισίων χρεῖαν. δεῖν οὖν τὸν παῖδα οὕτως ἀγεσθαι, 135
 ὥστε μὴ ζητεῖν ἐντὸς τῶν εἴκοσιν ἐτῶν τὴν τοιαύτην 136
 συνουσίαν. ὅταν δ' εἰς τοῦτο ἀφίκηται, σπανίοις εἶναι 137
 χρηστέον τοῖς ἀφροδισίοις. [ἔσεσθαι δὲ τοῦτο, ἐὰν τίμιόν τε 138

καὶ καλὸν εἶναι νομίζεται] ἡ **εὐεξία**· [ἀκρασίαν γὰρ ἅμα καὶ 139
 εὐεξίαν οὐ πάνυ γίνεσθαι περὶ τὸν αὐτόν.] ἐπαινέσθαι δ' 140
 αὐτοῖς ἔφασαν καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν προὔπαρχόντων νομίμων ἐν 141
 ταῖς Ἑλληνικαῖς πόλεσι, τὸ μῆτε μητράσι συγγίνεσθαι μῆτε 142
 θυγατρὶ μῆτ' ἀδελφῇ μῆτ' ἐν ἱερῷ μῆτ' ἐν τῷ φανερώ· καλὸν τε 143
 γὰρ εἶναι καὶ σύμφορον τὸ ὡς πλεῖστα γίνεσθαι κωλύματα τῆς 144
 [ἐνεργείας] ταύτης. ὑπελάμβανον δ', [ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐκεῖνοι οἱ 145
 ἄνδρες] περιαιρεῖν μὲν δεῖν τὰς τε παρὰ φύσιν γεννήσεις καὶ 146
 τὰς μεθ' ὕβρεως γιγνομένας, καταλιμπάνειν δὲ τῶν κατὰ φύσιν 147
 τε καὶ μετὰ σωφροσύνης γινομένων τὰς ἐπὶ τεκνοποιίᾳ σώφρονι 148
 τε **(211.)** καὶ νομίμῳ γινομένας. ὑπελάμβανον δὲ δεῖν πολλὴν 149
 πρόνοιαν ποιέσθαι τοὺς τεκνοποιοιμένους τῶν ἐσομένων 150
 ἐκγόνων. πρώτην μὲν οὖν εἶναι καὶ μεγίστην πρόνοιαν τὸ 151
 προσάγειν αὐτὸν πρὸς τὴν τεκνοποιίαν σωφρόνως τε καὶ 152
 ὑγιεινῶς βεβιωκότα τε καὶ ζῶντα [καὶ] **μῆτε πληρώσει** 153
 [χρώμενον] **τροφῆς** [ἀκαίρως μῆτε προσφερόμενον τοιαῦτα 154
 ἀφ' ὧν χεῖρους αἱ τῶν σωμάτων ἕξεις γίνονται,] **μῆτε δὴ** 155
μεθύοντά [γε, ἀλλ' ἥκιστα πάντων·] **ῥοντο γὰρ ἐκ φαύλης τε** 156
καὶ ἀσυμφώνου καὶ παραχώδους κράσεως μοχθηρὰ 157
(212.) γίνεσθαι τὰ σπέρματα. 158

159

καθόλου δὲ παντελῶς ῥοντο ῥαθύμου τινὸς εἶναι καὶ 160
 ἀπροσκέπτου τὸν μέλλοντα ζωοποιεῖν [καὶ ἄγειν τινὰ εἰς 161
 γένεσιν τε καὶ οὐσίαν,] τοῦτον μὴ μετὰ πάσης σπουδῆς 162
 προορᾶν, [ὅπως ἔσται ὡς χαριεστάτη τῶν γινομένων ἢ εἰς τὸ 163
 εἶναι τε καὶ ζῆν ἀφίξις], ἀλλὰ τοὺς μὲν φιλόκυνας μετὰ πάσης 164
 σπουδῆς ἐπιμελεῖσθαι τῆς σκυλακείας, ὅπως ἔξ ὧν δεῖ καὶ ὅτε δεῖ 165
 καὶ ὡς δεῖ διακειμένων προσηνῇ γίνηται τὰ σκυλάκια, ὡσαύτως 166
 δὲ καὶ τοὺς **(213.)** φιλόρνηθας (δῆλον δ' ὅτι καὶ τοὺς λοιποὺς τῶν 167
 ἐσπουδακόντων περὶ τὰ γενναῖα τῶν ζώων πᾶσαν ποιέσθαι 168
 σπουδὴν περὶ τοῦ μὴ εἰκῇ γίνεσθαι τὰς γεννήσεις αὐτῶν), τοὺς 169
 δ' ἀνθρώπους μηδὲνα λόγον ποιέσθαι τῶν ἰδίων ἐκγόνων, ἀλλ' 170
 ἅμα γεννᾶν εἰκῇ τε καὶ ὡς ἔτυχε σχεδιάζοντας πάντα τρόπον 171
 καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα τρέφειν τε καὶ παιδεύειν μετὰ πάσης ὀλιγωρίας. 172
 ταύτην γὰρ εἶναι τὴν ἰσχυροτάτην τε καὶ σαφεστάτην αἰτίαν 173
 τῆς τῶν πολλῶν ἀνθρώπων κακίας τε καὶ φαυλότητος. 174

βοσκηματώδη γὰρ καὶ εἰκαίαν τινὰ γίνεσθαι τὴν τεκνοποιῖαν 175
παρὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς. 176

τοιαῦτα τὰ ὑψηλῆματα καὶ ἐπιτηδεύματα παρὰ τοῖς ἀνδράσιν
ἐκείνοις διὰ λόγων τε καὶ ἔργων ἡσκεῖτο περὶ σωφροσύνης,
ἄνωθεν παρειληφόσιν αὐτοῖς τὰ παραγγέλματα ὥσπερ τινὰ
πυθόχρηστα λόγια παρ' αὐτοῦ Πυθαγόρου.

2 καί¹] del. Cobet 23 (τὸ)] Kiessling 31 ἀνδρῶδη] Arcerius
ἀνδριῶδη F 56 οὐκ οὖν] Arcerius οὐκοῦν F 62 εἴπερ] Cobet
ὥσπερ F 67 τὸ] P τὸν F εὐσχημον] Arcerius εὐσχήμονα
F βλέποντας] Scaliger βλέποντες F 94 ἐπιθυμήσουσι] Cobet
ἐπιθυμήσωσι F φεύγονται] Rohde φύγονται F φυλάσσονται
Deubner ἀφέγονται Cobet 110 μανικόν] Arcerius μαντικόν F
119 σοφίας] codd. <δεῖσθαι> σοφίας Rohde (cf. Nauck 1884
LXXVIII) σοφίας <δεῖσθαι> Diels (DK 1.475.30) 124 γεννήσεως]
codd. γενέσεως Ocellus γενέσεως παίδων Stobaeus 4.37.4
127–8 <ἀλλὰ δεῖν γενέσθαι> τινὰ χρόνον πρὸ τῆς καρποφορίας]
Westermann <ἀλλὰ δεῖ γενέσθαι> τινὰ χρόνον πρὸ τῆς
καρποφορίας Kiessling ἀλλὰ [ἀλλ' εἰ (sscr. ἢ) A] δεῖ γενέσθαι τινὰ
χρόνον πρὸς τὰς καρποφορίας Ocellus <ἀλλὰ δεῖν ἐγγενέσθαι>
τινὰ χρόνον πρὸ τῆς καρποφορίας Nauck ἀλλὰ χρόνον τινὰ
προπαρασκευάζεσθαι τῆς καρποφορίας Stobaeus 4.37.4 129 δεῖν
οὖν] Kiessling δεῖ οὖν F 137 δ'εἰς] Iambl. δὲ καὶ εἰς Stob.
4.37.4 142 μητράσι] Iambl. μητρί Ocellus 144 σύμφορον]
Iambl. πρόσφορον Ocellus 152 αὐτὸν] Küster αὐτὸν F 154
ἀκαίρως] Iambl. ἀκαίρου Ocellus ἀκαίρῳ Jaeger 155 σωμαίων]
Ocellus σωματικῶν Iambl. F μήτε] codd. μήτι Cobet 162 τοῦτον
μή] Diels τοῦτον εἰς . . . μή F 166 ὥς δεῖ] Scaliger ὥδι F 170–1 ἀλλ'
ἄμα] Iambl. F ἀλλὰ καὶ Ocellus

Translation

(200) Concerning opinion [they say that] they say the following: it is, on the one hand, foolish to heed every opinion and the opinion of every person, and especially to heed the opinion that arises among the many. For to form opinions and suppositions well belongs to few people. [For it is clear that those with knowledge do this, but these are few. So that it is clear that such an ability would not extend to the many.] On the other hand it is also foolish to despise every supposition and opinion [, for one with this disposition will turn out to be ignorant and incorrigible.] It is

necessary for the one without knowledge to learn that of which he happens to be ignorant and not to know, and for the one who is learning to heed the supposition and opinion of the one who knows and is able to teach. (201) As a general rule, they said it was necessary that those of the young who were going to be saved pay attention to the suppositions and opinions of their elders and of those who have lived nobly. In the entirety of human life certain ages have been “carved up” (for [they say that] they did indeed speak thus), which not just any man can connect to one another. For these ages are impeded by one another, if someone does not bring the person up nobly and correctly from birth. It is necessary then that, if the training of the child is noble, temperate and manly, a great part of this be transmitted to the age of the young man, and in the same way also, if both the care and also the training of the young man are noble, temperate and manly, a great part of this be transmitted to the age of the man, since what happens, in the case of the many at least, is strange and ridiculous. (202) For they think that as children they should be well ordered and temperate and keep away from everything that is thought to be vulgar and unseemly, but once they have become young men they are let alone, among the many at least, to do whatever they want. But generally into this age there flow together both kinds of faults. For young men make both childish errors and also those that belong to a man, and many of them. For it is most characteristic of the age of childhood to avoid practically the whole class of things that are serious and orderly and to pursue the class of things that involve play, lack of restraint and childish insolence. From this age then such a condition extends into the following age. But the class of strong desires, and in the same way also the class of desires that are covetous of honor, and likewise the remaining impulses and conditions which belong to the class of what is difficult and turbulent, enter into the age of young men from the age of men. (203) Wherefore of all ages this needs the most care. As a general rule, they said that a human being must never be let alone to do what he wishes, but that there should always be some supervision, i.e. a rule that is both lawful and seemly [, to which each of the citizens will be subject.] For an animal that is let alone and neglected quickly degenerates into vice and badness. [They said that] they often asked and raised a difficulty as to why we accustom children **to have a diet that is well ordered** and that has due proportion, and declare that **order and due proportion are fine** for them, but their opposites, **disorder and lack of due proportion**

are shameful, [wherefore it is also the case that the drunk and the glutton are held in great reproach.] For if none of these things is useful once we have reached manhood, it is pointless to accustom them to such order as children. (204) [The story is the same about the other habits.] At least this is not seen to happen in the case of the other animals that are trained by men, but right from the beginning the puppy and the colt learn and are made accustomed to those things which they will have to do when they are grown. But, as a general rule, they [said that the Pythagoreans] advised [those who met with them and became their associates] to beware of pleasure [above all things]. For nothing so trips us up nor throws us into error as this feeling. And as a general rule, [as it seems, they strove] never to do anything which had pleasure as the aim, for this aim is for the most part unseemly and harmful. But most of all with an eye to what is noble and seemly to do whatever should be done, and secondarily with an eye to what is advantageous and beneficial, and these things require no ordinary judgment.

{Wehrli fr. 38 starts with the following material:}

(205) **But concerning** [what has received the name bodily] **desire they** [said that those men] **said such things as this. Desire itself is a certain motion of the soul towards [something], an impulse and longing either for** [some] **filling or for presence of a sensation** [of some things or for a perceptive condition. Desire also arises for the opposites, i.e.] **for emptying and for absence and not to perceive** [some things.] **This experience is complex in its variety and has** [pretty nearly] **the most forms** [of anything in human life. The majority of human] **desires are acquired** [and produced by the men themselves], wherefore indeed this experience is in need of the greatest care, guarding and no ordinary training. For, when the body is empty, it is natural to desire food, and again when it has been filled to desire the appropriate emptying is also natural. But to desire superfluous food or superfluous and luxurious clothing and bedding or superfluous, costly and elaborate housing, is acquired. The same account applies also to dining services and drinking cups, servants, and creatures raised for food.

(206) And as a general rule, [of human experiences it is pretty much the case that] this most of all is the sort never to stop but to advance without limit. Wherefore, straight from youth those that spring up must

be taken care of so that they desire the things they should and flee from vain and superfluous desires,

{fr. 38 Wehrli stops here}

being undisturbed by and pure of such desires and despising both those who are in themselves worthy to be despised and also those who are bound up in desires. And especially to be detected are the vain, harmful, superfluous, and insolent desires that arise among those living in power. For there is nothing so strange that the soul of such children, men and women does not eagerly pursue it. (207) As a general rule, the human race is most varied in the range of its desires. A clear sign of this is the variety of food and drink. For there is an unlimited multitude of fruits, and an unlimited multitude of roots, which the human race employs. Moreover, it engages in eating meats of all sorts and it is difficult to find any animal of land, air or water of which it does not taste. And all sorts of ways of preparing these have been contrived and all sorts of mixtures of flavors. Therefore the human tribe understandably displays manifold forms of madness as a result of the disturbance of the soul. (208) For indeed each of the items of food and drink is responsible for a distinct condition. However, human beings notice things that immediately become responsible for great alteration, such as wine, because, up to a point, the more one drinks the more cheerful it makes one, but thereafter more mad and more shameless. [But other things that do not manifest such power they do not perceive. But everything that is eaten or drunk is responsible for a distinct condition.] Wherefore indeed it is a characteristic of great skill to detect and notice what sort and how many things should be employed for nourishment. [This knowledge belonged from the beginning to Apollo and Paion but later to Asclepius and his followers.]

(209) **Concerning generation they said that they said the following: As a general rule, they thought that it was necessary to guard against what is called precocious, for the precocious does not either in the case of plants or animals bear good fruit, <but it is necessary that there be> some time before bearing fruit, so that from bodies that are strong and which have been completed the seeds and the fruits arise.** It is necessary then to raise both the boys and the girls in toils, exercises and appropriate tests of endurance, supplying food that is in harmony with a life that is devoted to toil, temperance and patient endurance. **Many of the things in human life are such that late learning is a better**

thing, among which is also the use of sexuality. (210) It is necessary, then, that the children be so brought up that they do not seek such intercourse until they are twenty. Whenever the children have reached this age, they must rarely engage in sex. [This will be the case if] **good condition** [is regarded as something honored and fine. For intemperance and good condition do not at all arise at the same time in the same individual.] They said that they also praised the following sorts of customs, which existed before their time in the Greek cities: not to have intercourse with mothers, nor a daughter, nor a sister, nor in a temple, nor in public. For it is fine and advantageous that as many hindrances to this activity as possible arise. But those [men] used to suppose, [as it seems,] that it was necessary to strip away both engenderings that are contrary to nature and also those that arise by violence or excess and to leave alone the engenderings, among those which arise according to nature and with temperance, which arise for the purpose of temperate and lawful production of children (211). And they supposed that it was necessary that those producing children give great forethought for their future offspring. The first and greatest precaution is that one bring oneself to the production of children having lived and still living in a temperate and healthy way, **not taking one's fill of food** at the wrong time nor eating the sort of things from which the condition of bodies becomes worse, **nor indeed, when drunk**, but then least of all. **For they thought that from a temperament that is base and discordant and disordered** the seeds become unsound.

(212) As a general rule, they thought that it was in every way characteristic of a frivolous and improvident person that someone be about to produce life [and lead it to come to be and exist,] and that this person not take forethought with all seriousness [as to how the arrival into being and life of those who are generated will be as fine as possible]. But dog-fanciers manage the raising of puppies in all seriousness, so that puppies turn out of suitable temperament, being born from the right parents, at the right time, when the parents are in the right condition. (213) The same is also true of bird-fanciers. And it is also clear that the rest of those who devote themselves to the proper breeding of animals show all seriousness that their procreation not come about without plan. But human beings pay no attention to their own offspring, but procreate without plan and haphazardly, doing it altogether off-hand and afterwards rear and educate them with total neglect. For this is the most

powerful and the clearest cause of the vice and badness of most men. For the production of children among the many is something brutish and without purpose.

[Such guiding principles and practices were exercised by those men in word and deed with regard to temperance, having themselves taken the instructions over from earlier times, from Pythagoras himself, just as if they were Pythian oracles.]

Extent of the Fragment

Rohde argues that Iamblichus uses Aristoxenus as his source without break from section 200 to section 213 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (1871–2 = 1901: 161). Burkert (1972: 101, n. 17) and Dillon and Hershbell (1991: 205) agree with Rohde. Brisson and Segonds identify 209–13 as directly taken from Aristoxenus and note the overlaps between Stobaeus and parts of sections 200–8 but do not appear to suppose that these sections as a whole came from Aristoxenus (1996: 205–6). Wehrli only prints section 205 and the beginning of 206 as fragment 38 of Aristoxenus, although he ends the fragment with κτλ. suggesting that more of the following material might be by Aristoxenus. Staab is typically the most skeptical; he is even doubtful that Wehrli's fragment 38 is really from Aristoxenus. He agrees that Aristoxenus may be the deep background for the material in sections 200–13 and that there are, in places, verbatim passages of Aristoxenus, but he emphasizes that Iamblichus not only paraphrases extensively but is in effect providing exegesis of topics discussed by Aristoxenus and reformulates the material from Aristoxenus for his own purposes (Staab 2002: 398–409).

Rohde's conclusion, which is supported by most scholars, is based on two fundamental points: 1) sections 200–13 form a coherent whole, thus suggesting that they come from the same source, and 2) several passages in these sections (those in bold in the text and translation of the fragment above) are confirmed to have originated in Aristoxenus because of overlaps with the fragments surviving in Stobaeus (fr. 2 (end) and VP 203, fr. 3 and VP 205, and fr. 4 and VP 209–11). One basic feature of the uniformity of sections 200–13 is the pervasive use of main verbs whose subject is plural and understood to be "the Pythagoreans." This is in marked contrast to passages elsewhere in the VP, which we

can identify as by Iamblichus himself, where there is an equally marked tendency to use singular verbs with Pythagoras himself as the subject. Thus in section 214, where Iamblichus begins to speak in his own voice again, he talks in terms of what “Pythagoras himself” did. At the end of sections 200–13 Iamblichus, as he has done elsewhere, tries to unify his own use of the singular with the plurals of the preceding sections by inserting a transitional sentence which asserts that practices described in sections 200–13 “were exercised by those men” who took “the instructions over . . . from Pythagoras himself, just as if they were Pythian oracles.” The plurals that Iamblichus is here trying to reconcile with his own practice of using the singular are of course exactly what Aristoxenus uses throughout the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Thus, the plurals of 200–13 indicate that Iamblichus is not their author and, since Aristoxenus does use such plurals and since parts of 200–13 can definitively be shown to be from Aristoxenus because of passages which are the same as fragments of the *Pythagorean Precepts*, it is plausible to conclude that the *Precepts* were the source for all the material in sections 200–13.

Once again, however, Rohde’s position can be buttressed with even further arguments. The uniformity of style in sections 200–13 is even more pronounced than Rohde has indicated and the distinctive features of that style can be shown to belong to the *Pythagorean Precepts*.

First, as in the fragments of the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus, the main verbs throughout these sections are not verbs describing actions of the Pythagoreans but are consistently verbs of saying and thinking introducing indirect statement, so that almost all of the passage is in indirect statement with subjects in the accusative and verbs in the infinitive.

Second, the passage emphasizes just the two themes emphasized in the *Precepts*: 1) There is a heavy emphasis precisely on precepts, i.e. on what must or should be done. There are nine uses of δεῖν in these sections, almost a quarter of the thirty-nine uses in all of Iamblichus’ treatise crammed into only 5 percent of the text, and three uses of verbal adjectives in -τεος. Both δεῖν and verbal adjectives in -τεος are common in the *Precepts*. 2) There is a strong interest in defining terms (e.g., desire in 205), making classifications (e.g., types of opinions in 200) and establishing hierarchies (e.g., the periods of life in 201) as in the fragments of the *Precepts* in Stobaeus.

Third, the phrase καθόλου δέ is used very frequently in this passage (eight times) and, as I have argued in the analysis of the style of the *Precepts* in the Introduction, it is much more likely to be a mark of Aristoxenus' style than Iamblichus'. Fourth, the passage is structured by the use of περὶ δέ with the genitive to mark new sections. This occurs three times ("but concerning opinion," "but concerning . . . desire" and "but concerning generation"). Iamblichus also uses this structure, but as I have shown in the analysis of the style of the *Precepts*, it is much more marked in Aristoxenus.

Finally, it is a peculiar characteristic of the *Pythagorean Precepts* that none of the surviving fragments ever refers to the Pythagoreans by name. The subject is always simply "they." In sections 200–13 of Iamblichus this rule is observed with only one exception in 204, in a context where Iamblichus could easily have added the reference. Elsewhere in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, Iamblichus refers to Pythagoreans by name frequently; there are some sixty references.

There is one other notable uniformity in the style of presentation of sections 200–13. In seven different places in these sections an odd double indirect statement is used. Instead of simply saying "they (i.e. the Pythagoreans) said," Iamblichus has "they say/said that they (i.e. the Pythagoreans) said/asked/advised/praised . . ." This uniformity is particularly important, since it appears nowhere else in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* and thus suggests that Iamblichus is drawing on the same source throughout these sections. Who is this mysterious "they" to whom Iamblichus repeatedly appeals in these sections? Rohde gave an explanation that has great initial plausibility (1871–2 = 1901: 163). He argued that this double indirect statement belonged not to Iamblichus but to his source, Aristoxenus. Moreover, this odd locution makes perfect sense in the case of Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*, since the most plausible explanation of that work is that Aristoxenus is in it presenting what he learned about Pythagorean ethics from the Pythagoreans of his time, who instructed him in Pythagoreanism in his youth, e.g., his teacher Xenophilus. Thus, Aristoxenus can be seen as scrupulously reporting not what the Pythagoreans said but rather what Xenophilus and other Pythagoreans of his day reported about what the Pythagoreans of earlier times said.

Despite the initial attractiveness of this suggestion, however, further consideration suggests that it is very unlikely to be correct. The major problem is that none of the excerpts of the *Pythagorean Precepts* quoted by Stobaeus has the double indirect statement form; they all have the simple form “they (i.e. the Pythagoreans) said/thought.” Rohde argues that Stobaeus or his source must have changed all the excerpts to the simpler form from the more complex form found in Iamblichus, but surely this is unlikely. Stobaeus usually does not intervene in his excerpts to this extent and it would be surprising that every one of his excerpts, which are quoted in different parts of his collection, should without exception be rewritten in this way. Furthermore, the double indirect statement does not appear in the other fragments of the *Precepts* preserved by Iamblichus himself (VP 101–2; 174–6, 180–3). If the double indirect statement was a feature of *Precepts* it is not at all clear why Iamblichus would only preserve it in the case of sections 200–13 and nowhere else. Particularly noteworthy is Iamblichus’ own procedure in sections 101–2. In this case Iamblichus explicitly refers to the term “Pythagorean precepts” and says that he will give a few out of many examples. What follows thus does not need to be adapted to Iamblichus’ overall narrative and can be presented in unadapted form as examples. The examples that Iamblichus provides have exactly the form we find in the excerpts from Stobaeus. They are all introduced by a past tense verb of saying and thinking in the third person plural with no expressed subject (they “advised,” “said,” “thought”). If Rhode’s thesis were correct we would have to suppose that in this case Iamblichus went in and removed “they said” before each of these verbs, which had stood in Aristoxenus’ original. Surely it is more reasonable to suppose that Iamblichus’ presentation here, when he is explicitly giving examples of the *Precepts*, agrees in form with Stobaeus’ presentation of the excerpts because that was what Aristoxenus wrote, rather than to assume that Iamblichus and Stobaeus both independently went in and removed from every excerpt the “they said” which appeared in Aristoxenus’ original.

Moreover, in two of the seven instances of the double indirect statement in Iamblichus, the first verb is in the present tense (200 and 201, “they say that they say”). The present tense is never used in the fragments of Aristoxenus’ *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus and thus its use in Iamblichus, in the midst of verbs that are mostly in the past tense, is

most reasonably explained as due to Iamblichus himself slipping into the present rather than the past tense. Since the present tense is due to Iamblichus in these cases, it is likely that the double indirect statement is as well. Another indication that the insertion of “they say” or “they said” is due to Iamblichus is that, although throughout the excerpts from the *Precepts* in Stobaeus there is no mention of the Pythagoreans or even the use of such expressions as “those men,” the subject always being an indefinite “they,” in two cases where “they said” is used in 200–13 the expressions “the Pythagoreans” (204) and “those men” (205) are inserted. The most plausible explanation of the appearance of these expressions in these places is that they were introduced by whoever introduced the verbs governing them (“they say/said”). Indeed Iamblichus introduces such definite subjects for the verbs in other places where he quotes the *Precepts* (174 “the Pythagoreans” and 230 “these men”). Since Aristoxenus never uses such expressions in the excerpts preserved in Stobaeus, both these expressions and the “they say/said” that introduces them are likely to belong to Iamblichus.

Another objection to Rohde’s thesis arises from the content of the *Precepts* themselves. If Rohde were right and the *Precepts* reported what the Pythagoreans of Aristoxenus’ time reported about the Pythagoreans of earlier times then we would expect the *Precepts* to reflect an earlier Pythagoreanism than the early fourth century. However, again and again the *Precepts* show connections precisely to the late fifth and early fourth centuries rather than to the early Pythagoreanism reflected, e.g., in the *acismata*. Thus, the content of the *Precepts* shows that Aristoxenus was reporting what principles the Pythagoreans of his own time, e.g., his Pythagorean teacher Xenophilus, thought ought to govern the Pythagorean life. Thus, he presented the *Precepts* as simply what “they” said as the excerpts quoted in Stobaeus show.

If this is so, how do we explain the reference of the first “they” in the “they said that they” formula, which appears in Iamblichus? It seems most likely that this is simply Iamblichus’ indefinite way of referring to the evidence available to him. Thus, the “they say” refers to the tradition as represented by the various sources that Iamblichus uses, without being specific about which one he is actually using. Such uses of the present $\phi\alpha\sigma\iota$ are frequently found elsewhere in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. There are no fewer than twenty examples outside of sections 200–13. Some of these may reflect the usage of Iamblichus’ sources, but in

other cases the $\phi\alpha\sigma\iota$ is likely to be his own. Thus in section 159, in what appears to be a typical concluding remark by Iamblichus, he makes just such a vague reference to the tradition, when he says “they say that Pythagoras took over these things.” Similarly in section 130 Iamblichus reports that “they say that Pythagoras was the founder of political education as a whole.” In these cases “they say” refers to no specific group of people and is equivalent to an impersonal expression such as “it is reported.”

It appears then that in sections 200–13, Iamblichus turned to using a series of texts from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. These texts frequently began “they said” as we can see from the excerpts in Stobaeus. Iamblichus chooses to introduce these texts with the vague expression “they say” or “it is reported” which he uses elsewhere but which here produces the awkward expression “they say that they said.” Iamblichus first uses the “they say” at 200 when he begins to quote from the *Precepts* and introduces it again in six other places, most of which mark important new topics in the discussion (see especially 205 and 209), so that it is likely that its use usually marks places where Iamblichus is turning from one section or excerpt of the *Precepts* to a new one. (The use in 201 is an exception; see the commentary below.) It is striking that the first two (200–1) of the seven instances are in the present tense, while the remaining five (203, 204, 205, 209, 210) are in the past tense. It looks very much as if the present were used at the beginning of the section, but, since most of the other main verbs in 200–13 are past tense, either Iamblichus or a copyist slid from the present to the past tense to match the tense of the rest of the passage.

There is one final argument against Rhode’s suggestion that the “they said that they” formula belongs to Aristoxenus. If Rhode’s account is accepted, then the excerpts from the *Precepts* in sections 200–13 are presented by Iamblichus without any sort of introduction at all. He simply starts quoting from them at 200 and stops at 213. This is unparalleled. Iamblichus is often somewhat awkward in the way in which he incorporates material, but in every other case when he quotes from the *Precepts* he makes some attempt to integrate the material into his account. In light of Iamblichus’ practice elsewhere and the arguments given above, it seems overwhelmingly likely that “they say/said that they” are Iamblichus’ words and represent the simplest way of integrating the material into his text even if it produces a rather awkward expression in Greek. Iamblichus is simply telling us that it is/was reported that they

said or thought the following, where what follows is a quotation from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. His consistent use of this practice throughout this section suggests that he is dealing with a single source.

The uniformity of the style characterized by the specific features discussed above is not broken by major intrusions anywhere in sections 200–13 so that it is very likely that the material derives from one source and that that source is Aristoxenus. On the other hand, the comparison between fragment 2 and VP 203, fragment 3 and VP 205 and fragment 4 and VP 209–11 (see the Introduction), shows that while some passages in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* are taken almost verbatim from Aristoxenus' original, Iamblichus or his source or some combination of the two have engaged in paraphrasing and explanatory expansion in other cases. Nonetheless, in the cases where we can check Iamblichus with the original, his contribution is precisely in the elaboration of the central ideas and in supplying examples rather than in introducing novel fundamental principles (see [Chapter 5](#) of the Introduction). Thus, it is possible to regard the central ideas presented in sections 200–13 as going back to Aristoxenus with a high degree of confidence, while recognizing that some of the material in these sections has also been introduced by Iamblichus and/or his source as further elaboration of the basic ideas. In the text above I have inserted square brackets around sections in which it is likely that Iamblichus has introduced the most material, although it is of course always possible that some of this elaboration goes back to Aristoxenus and that some material that I have not marked was introduced by Iamblichus. The occasional sentences that are not in indirect statement are very likely cases of intrusive remarks by Iamblichus but, in most cases, his remarks are in indirect statement just like the surrounding material from Aristoxenus. It also appears that in sections 210–11 Iamblichus or his source has inserted material from elsewhere in the *Precepts* (see the characteristic ὑπελάμβανον . . . δεῖν) in the middle of an extract from fragment 4 just as he inserted material from fragment 2 into the midst of material from fragment 1 in sections 175–6 (fr. 8).

Sections 205–8 present a particularly interesting case. As shown in the Introduction, the first five lines of fragment 3, which is derived from Stobaeus, correspond very closely with the first part of Iamblichus, VP 205. The rest of section 205 through section 208 is more problematic since it does not correspond closely to anything in the final six lines of

fragment 3 or any other passage in Stobaeus. Fragment 3, having made a simple distinction between acquired and natural desires and having given the definition of desire, goes on in the final six lines to identify three ways in which desire can be mistaken. This threefold classification is totally missing from Iamblichus. In Iamblichus the idea of acquired desires is introduced in the same language as Stobaeus but, before the simple contrast with natural desires can be stated explicitly as in Stobaeus, the passage in Iamblichus goes into a long discourse on the dangers of superfluous desires and includes a number of areas in which these desires can be found (clothing, bedding, housing, drinking cups, servants, animals desired for food). In the course of this passage a contrast is made between natural (φυσικός) desire for nourishment and a desire for nourishment and other things that goes beyond what is needed (περίεργος). One might suppose that all of these examples of superfluous desires are supplied as elaboration by Iamblichus. However, close study of the vocabulary of lines 85–9 indicates that most of the material goes back to Aristoxenus. Thus, the crucial term “superfluous” (περίεργος) appears nowhere else in Iamblichus’ writings but is used five times in the space of fourteen lines here (lines 85–99 – see the commentary on line 85). Surely the unique appearance of the word in the context of material that clearly belongs to Aristoxenus suggests that it is his rather than Iamblichus’. There is likely to be some elaboration by Iamblichus here; in particular we might suspect that the last sentence in the section (lines 87–9), which begins with “the same account also applies,” belongs to Iamblichus.

After these examples, at the beginning of section 206, the expression καθόλου δέ suggests that Aristoxenus continues to be the source for the notable point that this aspect of human life (i.e. desire) more than any other is such as never stands still but always advances without limit, so that it is crucial from childhood to make sure that people desire what is fitting. This is then followed by a discussion of empty and needless desires that lasts the rest of section 206. The vocabulary suggests that the core of this material again goes back to Aristoxenus. Thus, the distinctive “superfluous” appears twice in these lines (95 and 99). Section 207 in lines 102–105 appears to continue to be derived closely from Aristoxenus both because of the telltale καθόλου δέ and because the word ποικιλία, which is central to the Pythagorean account of desire, appears twice. What follows on these lines is close argument in support

of them with γάρ appearing in line 105 and again in line 112 so that the text is likely to be following Aristoxenus closely up to line 112. Lines 112–13 provide the crucial principle about the influence of diet on the soul that builds on the point about the motions of the soul in line 111 and thus surely belongs to Aristoxenus. The vocabulary of lines 115–17, which introduce the example of wine and its effect on the body, is appropriate for Aristoxenus and these lines are likely to belong to him. However, the following assertion that people are ignorant of the fact that other foods have an effect in line 118 may originate with Iamblichus. This would make most sense of the fact that in lines 118–19 the same principle as stated in line 112 is repeated in very similar language. Iamblichus notes that most people are ignorant of the effect of foods that do not have so pronounced an effect as wine and then provides a paraphrase of the principle given in line 112, i.e. that each food is the cause of its own unique condition. The statement in the next sentence (lines 119–20), that the greatest wisdom is thus needed to determine what and how many foods should be eaten, provides a powerful conclusion to the section and is likely to belong to Aristoxenus' original. The concluding comment, that this knowledge began with Apollo and Paeon and continued with the followers of Asclepius, looks like a gloss by Iamblichus or his source especially because specific names of deities are not found elsewhere in the *Precepts*.

Section 1 – Lines 1–14: Context

Iamblichus devotes chapter 31 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (sections 187–213) to the virtue of temperance (σωφροσύνη) in Pythagoreanism. As I have argued above, internal evidence shows that the entire second half of this chapter, sections 200–13, is derived from Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*. It is important to get an overview of the whole chapter and Iamblichus' method of constructing it, in order to understand the context for the material from the *Pythagorean Precepts*, which he includes as sections 200–13. Rohde's study of Iamblichus' sources in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (1871–2 = 1901: 159–63) provides a good account of the chapter, and I will follow him on many points, while also taking note of more modern scholarship, particularly that of Staab. The chapter starts with two sections composed by Iamblichus himself (187–8), but which draw word for word on passages

that he has already quoted earlier in his work and which Rohde reasonably identifies as coming from Nicomachus (34) and Apollonius (68–9). In the midst of this material Iamblichus includes a brief reference to a report found in a number of other ancient sources (e.g., Diod. Sic. 10.5.2), according to which the Pythagoreans tested their self-control by having elaborate banquets served, which they surveyed and then sent away. Thus Iamblichus starts the chapter in sections 187–8 by composing his own introduction that draws on several sources.

In sections 189–94 Iamblichus presents the story of the Pythagoreans who refused to enter a bean field when pursued by the soldiers of the tyrant Dionysius and the related story of the heroism of the Pythagoreans Myllias and Timycha in their dealings with Dionysius. Iamblichus explicitly identifies both stories as examples of Pythagorean self-control (189), which allows them to follow their principles even in the face of the death. As Rohde suggests, comparison with chapter 59 of Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras*, where Porphyry refers to the same sources as Iamblichus for the Myllias and Timycha story (Hippobotus and Neanthes) but where those sources seem to be quoted in a passage which Porphyry expressly assigns to Nicomachus, clearly suggests that Iamblichus drew sections 189–94 from Nicomachus' *Life of Pythagoras*. Section 195 again appears to be a composition of Iamblichus himself. It marks a sudden change of topic to Pythagorean silence and the connection to the previous material is made abruptly by simply saying "similar to these were the things they advised about silence, leading to the practice of self-control." Yet this transition is clearly the work of Iamblichus, since it specifically alludes to his focus in this chapter, self-control. Throughout the brief section 195 Iamblichus follows his usual practice of referring to actions of Pythagoras himself. In sections 196–8 the grammatical subject shifts awkwardly to the plural and the source for some of the information is explicitly said to be Aristoxenus' father Spintharus, so that it is likely that Iamblichus is here relying on Aristoxenus, who frequently used the plural in his discussions of the Pythagoreans. Rohde assumes that these passages came from the *Pythagorean Precepts*, because Aristoxenus uses the plural throughout that work. However, Aristoxenus wrote a number of other works on the Pythagoreans including *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, where plurals would also be widely used. In this case we can be sure that the excerpt from Aristoxenus in 196–8 came from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*

rather than the *Pythagorean Precepts*, since one sentence of 198 is repeated word for word later in section 230, where Iamblichus expressly says that the source is Aristoxenus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*.

In the excerpt from Aristoxenus in sections 196–8, the focus has been on the Pythagoreans' avoidance of strong emotion as an example of their temperance and in particular on their way of dealing with anger, which is illustrated by the story of Archytas' refusal to punish in anger. In the middle of section 198 the focus changes abruptly to the Pythagorean practice of assigning their own works to the master. The transition is made by the rather awkward statement that "it was also a fine thing that they ascribed everything to Pythagoras." Rohde (1871–2 = 1901: 160–1) and Staab (2002: 398) agree in regarding this transition as a sign that a new source is being used and treat the remark as Iamblichus' own. Indeed, the simple and abrupt transition here, "it was also a fine thing," is reminiscent of the similarly simple and abrupt transition shortly before in section 195, "similar to these were." Following this brief transition, the Pythagorean practice of not claiming credit for their own work is then supported by the assertion that there are very few Pythagoreans to whom works are ascribed personally (second half of 198) and illustrated by the report that down to the time of Philolaus no one appears to have encountered a work by a Pythagorean (199). Philolaus is reported to have sold three books to Plato because of his poverty. In context it seems as if Iamblichus must take these books to be by Philolaus, since he has been discussing the scarcity of works ascribed to individual Pythagoreans until the time of Philolaus. It is likely, however, that the original intent of the story was to show that Philolaus had published three books written by Pythagoras, from which Plato plagiarized (Burkert 1972: 223–6). At any rate Rohde's account assigns the second half of section 198 and all of 199 to Iamblichus himself (1871–2 = 1901: 160–1).

Both Dillon and Hershbelt and Brisson and Segonds, however, have supposed that the second half of section 198 must also be drawn from Aristoxenus (1991: 203, n. 12; 1996: 204) and thus be a continuation of the material drawn from him starting in section 196. The abrupt transition at the beginning of the second half, which is described above, speaks against this supposition. As awkward as the transition is, it links two examples of Pythagorean self-control, their control of anger and their glorification of the master at the expense of their own glory. Iamblichus'

chapter is specifically devoted to self-control so such a transition makes sense for him, even if it is awkward. The passage of Aristoxenus that Iamblichus quotes in 196–8 focuses on Pythagorean techniques for dealing with strong emotions and it is not at all clear how the practice of assigning all works to the master fits into this theme. It is more reasonable to assume that the transition marks the end of Iamblichus' quotation from Aristoxenus and the beginning of a section of his own composition. The scholars cited above argue that the second half of section 198 must be ascribed to Aristoxenus because of its assertion that there are very few works of individual Pythagoreans that are known. The point is that such a statement might be true in the fourth century, when Aristoxenus was writing, but is impossible in the time of Iamblichus, when a number of pseudo-Pythagorean writings had been produced and ascribed to individual Pythagoreans. Dillon and Hershbell point out that forty-three authors other than Pythagoras are represented in Thesleff's collection of the pseudo-Pythagorean texts (1991: 203, n. 12). The problem of course is that we have no idea of how many and which of these authors listed in Thesleff were available to Iamblichus. He certainly will have known of forgeries in the names of Archytas and Philolaus, which he may have regarded as genuine works, but these are only two names. Moreover, Iamblichus' point that few works by individual Pythagoreans were known until the time of Philolaus suggests that he is particularly thinking of the lack of works by individual Pythagoreans in the early period. Iamblichus provides a catalogue of some 235 Pythagoreans at the end of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, a catalogue that may in part go back to Aristoxenus (Huffman 2008b). As Burkert notes, 145 of these names, well over half, appear only in the catalogue (1972: 105, n. 40). Thus these 145 names are not connected to any writings, nor are there any writings known for a number of the other names in the catalogue. If we take the catalogue as an indication of people that Iamblichus regarded as individual Pythagoreans, it would be perfectly reasonable for him to assert that few writings of this huge number of individual Pythagoreans were known. Thus there is nothing in the second half of section 198 which should lead us to doubt that it is by Iamblichus.

Brisson and Segonds have also argued that the story about Plato buying books from Philolaus in section 199 goes back to Aristoxenus (For earlier advocates of this view see Schorn 2004: 363, n. 935).

The only argument that they give in support of this view is that Aristoxenus is well known for his hostility to Plato and would accordingly have been all too willing to suggest that Plato had plagiarized his philosophy from Pythagorean books bought from Philolaus (Brisson and Segonds 1996: 204). Wehrli included the similar report about Plato and Philolaus in Diogenes Laertius 8.15 as part of fragment 43 of Aristoxenus but, as Burkert notes, this is arbitrary (1972: 226, n. 40). Diogenes cites Aristoxenus a few lines after this passage but, given Diogenes' "mosaic-style methods of composition," this is hardly adequate to show that the earlier passage also belongs to Aristoxenus. The central difficulty with supposing that the story of Plato's buying the three books from Philolaus goes back to Aristoxenus is, as Burkert shows (1972: 223–7), that the three books are almost certainly the three books assigned to Pythagoras elsewhere in the tradition: *On Education*, *On Statesmanship*, and *On Nature* (Diog. Laert. 8.6; Schol. Pl. *Rep.* 600b; *Suda* s.v. Pythagoras). These books did not exist in the fourth century when Aristoxenus was writing or we would have heard about them from Plato, Aristotle or other Peripatetic sources. Dicaearchus, Aristoxenus' contemporary, famously reports (Porph. *VP* 19) that little was known of the teachings of Pythagoras, which would make little sense if three books were circulating in his name. The three books are first securely attested by Satyrus around 200 BC (Burkert 1972: 224). It is not clear how Brisson and Segonds would respond to Burkert's arguments, since they make no mention of them. Schorn (2004: 363) makes the additional point that, although Aristoxenus does show some hostility to Plato, he says that Plato used Protagoras and not the Pythagoreans in composing the *Republic* (Diog. Laert. 3.37). Thus, the story that Plato bought the three books from Philolaus, including *On Statesmanship*, which is clearly being presented as the model for the *Republic*, is unlikely, for this reason as well, to go back to Aristoxenus. In summary then, Iamblichus' chapter on temperance has the following parts: 1) two sections composed by Iamblichus himself (187–8); 2) six sections derived from Nicomachus' *Life of Pythagoras* (189–94); 3) another section by Iamblichus himself (195); 4) two and a half sections from Aristoxenus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (196–8 middle); 5) a section and a half again composed by Iamblichus himself (198 middle–199) and 6) fourteen sections taken from Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* (200–13).

With this overview of the structure of Chapter 31 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* as background, it is now time to turn to the crucial question of the transition from the first half of the chapter to the material that Iamblichus draws from the *Precepts* in sections 200–13. In the paragraph immediately preceding section 200, where the quotation from the *Pythagorean Precepts* begins, Iamblichus makes the point that it is a fine custom of the Pythagoreans to ascribe everything to Pythagoras and only rarely to claim personal glory (δόξα) for their discoveries. He evidently takes the Pythagoreans' attempt to glorify Pythagoras at the expense of their own glory as a sign of the self-control that is the subject of his whole chapter. It might then appear that the crucial point of connection between section 200 and what precedes it is the concept of δόξα, and that Iamblichus picked this passage to start his quotation from the *Precepts* precisely because it focuses on δόξα. Nonetheless, this is not likely to be the case. The discussion of δόξα from the *Pythagorean Precepts*, which begins section 200, does not, in fact, deal with δόξα in the sense of “glory” which is the clear focus in section 199, but rather in the sense of “opinion.” The central question of the *Precepts* here is to which opinions we should pay heed if we want to learn or to live a good life, not whether we should pursue glory. Moreover, Iamblichus' central concern in Chapter 31 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* is temperance not δόξα, which was only introduced to make a point about temperance in section 199. Staab (2002: 398) argues that it is the common concern with δόξα that unites sections 198–9 and 200, but his attempt to claim that Iamblichus thereby achieves a coherent treatment of the topic, which rules out the possibility of section 200 being derived from the *Precepts*, is little more than assertion and not convincing. The awkwardness of the connection between what are, in fact, two quite different senses of δόξα very much suggests that Iamblichus is turning to a new source in section 200, and as internal arguments show, that source is the *Precepts*.

If δόξα is not the point of connection between sections 199 and 200, how are we to understand what led Iamblichus to begin quoting from the *Precepts* with the material on δόξα, in the sense of “opinion,” at this point? At first sight the material has no obvious connection to Iamblichus' central focus on temperance. However, the adjective “temperate” and the verb “to be temperate” appear three times in the space of eight lines in lines 19–26 of the excerpt from the *Precepts*, and the following material deals with the concepts of pleasure, desire and sex that are central to any discussion of

temperance. Indeed there is explicit reference to temperance four more times in the following lines (132, 148 [2], 152). It is thus clear that Iamblichus correctly saw that this section of the *Precepts* focused on issues central to the virtue of temperance and thought it was valuable to include what was said in his own chapter on temperance. The question for Iamblichus would then be where to begin his quotation, since this section of the *Precepts* did not formally announce that it was about temperance. Since he could see that temperance is first formally mentioned in line 19 but that it there appears in the middle of a larger argument, he needed to decide how far before line 19 to start quoting in order to make what is said about temperance in lines 19–26 intelligible. The discussion of temperance in lines 19–26 deals with age groups. This would make it reasonable to go back to line 15 where the age groups are first introduced. However, in the immediately preceding line the *Precepts* state a general principle that is relevant both to the following issue of age groups and to the issue of temperance, i.e. that those of the young who are going to be saved must pay attention to the opinions and suppositions of their elders. It seems likely that Iamblichus thought that this principle should be included, but this principle is in turn embedded in the larger section on “opinion” found in lines 1–14 and Iamblichus accordingly decided to go back to the beginning of the whole section on opinion in the *Precepts*, which clearly begins a new topic and is not obviously dependent on anything else. As a result of this decision by Iamblichus the reader is at first puzzled as to how the discussion of opinion that begins in section 200 is relevant to the topic of temperance but gradually the relevance becomes clear and explicit mentions of temperance begin to appear. This understanding of Iamblichus’ practice shows him to be a careful excerptor from the *Precepts*, concerned to make sure that he provides the context necessary to allow the reader to understand the quotation and is far preferable to the assumption that he was trying to awkwardly combine two passages on δόξα that do not, in fact, cohere.

Section 1 – Lines 1–14: Overview of the Argument

The topic of this section is clear from its first three words. It is “concerned with δόξα.” Detailed study of the content shows that the

Pythagoreans are here focusing on its meaning of “opinion,” “belief” or “judgment” rather than its meaning “glory” (see the detailed commentary on line 1). This is particularly clear from its pairing with ὑπόληψις in the following lines, since ὑπόληψις means “supposition” so that the two words are being treated essentially as synonyms in contrast to Aristotle who develops a distinction between δόξα and ὑπόληψις (see the detailed commentary on lines 3–4). The topic of these lines is then opinions and suppositions. Greek philosophers make an important distinction between opinion and knowledge beginning already with division between the way of truth and the way of opinion (δόξα) in Parmenides’ poem (fr. 8.50–2). Detailed discussions of δόξα are provided by both Plato and Aristotle, including careful distinctions between it and other cognitive states such as knowledge (e.g., Pl. *Resp.* 477e–480a; Arist. *EN* 1145b22–1146a4). It appears, however, that this passage of the *Precepts* is innocent of these distinctions. Rather than being distinguished from knowledge δόξα is instead assigned precisely to those who know. One who wants to learn is advised to pay attention to the opinions and suppositions of the one who knows. Of course, it is possible for the one who knows to have opinions in areas where he does not have knowledge, but here, clearly, it is precisely because these opinions express knowledge that the student is supposed to heed them. Thus, in this section the opinions and suppositions in question can be either true or false depending on whether they are held by those who know or not; the opinions are not, however, by the very fact that they are called opinions, defective cognitive states as they often are in Plato or Aristotle.

The basic point of the section is simple. We should neither heed every opinion nor reject every opinion. In particular, we should not heed the opinion of the many, because the ability to form good suppositions and opinions belongs only to the few. It will not do, however, just to reject all the opinions of others, because it is necessary, if we are going to gain the knowledge that we lack, to heed the suppositions and opinions of the one who has knowledge and is able to teach. It is noteworthy that the mere possession of knowledge on the part of the teacher is not adequate to insure that the student will learn. The teacher has to have an undefined further ability to teach. This ability might be related to the willingness to teach that the *Precepts* require of the teacher in fragment 10. The final sentence of this section of the *Precepts* stresses that the need to pay attention to the opinions and suppositions of others is particularly acute

for the young. The young will not be saved, if they do not pay attention to the opinions and suppositions of their elders and those who have lived well. Those who have lived well cannot be younger than these young men, so the meaning of this last sentence is presumably that the young must pay attention to those who are both their elders and who have lived well. The general tone of the *Precepts* suggests that the young always owe their obedience to any of their elders, but this passage indicates that not all elders have equally valuable opinions. The young should heed the opinions of those elders who have lived good lives. No guidance is forthcoming on how to distinguish this group of elders but the adverb “well” (καλῶς) perhaps indicates that it is those elders who have lived lives in accordance with traditional nobility set out in the *Precepts*. What it means for the young to be saved is an interesting question that is also not directly addressed in the fragment. The basic presupposition of the Pythagorean moral system in the *Precepts* is that human beings are by nature hubristic, i.e. insolent and excessive (fr. 8). The point is that the young will not be saved from themselves, not saved from the inevitable ruin that follows from allowing their basic nature to run riot, if they do not heed the opinions of their elders who have lived well (see the commentary on fr. 2, line 2).

The core philosophical message of the passage may appear rather commonplace. Who would doubt that some opinions are more worthy of our attention than others? Yet, Plato, in the *Crito*, has Socrates present a very similar view as fundamental to the life of a philosopher and hence worthy of our attention no matter how apparently commonplace. The *Crito* and the *Precepts* agree that in making important moral decisions on how to live our lives we should not just accept the opinions of the masses. Both agree that we should heed some opinions and not others and that it is the opinions of those who know that should be heeded, but there are important differences in the way these ideas are developed.

In the dialogue that bears his name, *Crito* focuses on δόξα as reputation. He is concerned that, if Socrates dies according to the court sentence, people will think that his friends, including Crito, were cowards and cared too much about their own money to save their friend Socrates (44b–c, 45e). He constantly refers to the disgrace (αἰσχίων 44c, αἰσχύνομαι 45e, αἰσχρά 46a) arising from the reputation that will arise among the many, if Socrates is put to death and does not escape. In contrast, reputation is not the focus of the *Precepts* and none of the

words referring to shame and disgrace are used. In response to Crito's concerns, Socrates then turns to an extended consideration of whose opinions should be heeded. It is here that he says things that are closest to what we find in the *Precepts*. He asks whether they had been right in the past to pay attention to some opinions and not to others and in doing so uses language that is similar to that of the *Precepts* (46c–d – ταῖς μὲν δεῖ τῶν δοξῶν προσέχειν τὸν νοῦν, ταῖς δὲ οὐ). He goes on (47a) to say that we should esteem the good (χρηστάς) opinions and not the bad (πονηράς) ones and the good ones are those of the wise (φρονίμων) and the bad those of the foolish (ἄφρόνων). None of this language appears in the *Precepts*. Plato concludes the argument by pointing out that, if an athlete paid attention to the opinions of the many rather than the trainer, the result would be that his body would be ruined. It would be much worse, however, to follow the opinions of the many about what is right and wrong with the result that our soul is ruined. There is no parallel for this argument in this passage of the *Precepts*, where no distinction between body and soul is made. On the other hand, the *Crito* has none of the discussion of the role of following opinions in teaching and the necessity for the young to follow the opinions of their elders, both of which are central to the *Precepts*.

It is striking that in this passage of the *Precepts* the only way envisaged for students to gain knowledge that they do not have is to learn it from others who do. This is in contrast with Plato's Socrates, who does indeed suggest that more attention should be paid to the opinions of the expert (48a) than those of the multitude but who also implies that there might not be any such person (47d) and in fact proceeds not by consulting experts but by constructing an argument and trying to determine the truth for himself (46b). The *Precepts* also differ on this point from the theory of Archytas, a Pythagorean roughly contemporary with the *Precepts*, who uses the same adjective as the *Precepts* to describe the one without knowledge (ἀνεπιστήμων), but who emphasizes that, in addition to learning from others, we have the ability to discover truth for ourselves by the use of calculation (λογισμός – Huffman 2005: 188–90). Archytas, in fact, implies that this latter method is preferable because it leads to knowledge that is in an important sense our own and not just something that is in fact another's (fr. 3). This disparity between the *Crito* and Archytas, on the one hand, and the *Precepts*, on the other, should not be surprising. The mode of instruction in the *Precepts* is

precisely that of handing on rules of behavior from those that know to those that do not. Throughout the *Precepts* as well as in this very passage there is an overwhelming emphasis on hierarchy and respect for authority. Archytas thus appears as an advocate of a more progressive Pythagoreanism, in which individual discovery is emphasized, perhaps because of his own notable discoveries in mathematics. His position may have been developed precisely to correct the view found in the *Precepts*.

The discussion of δόξα in the *Precepts* can itself perhaps be viewed as a development of ideas found earlier in the Pythagorean tradition. There are a number of references to δόξα in the Pythagorean tradition, but it is often hard to determine whether they refer to Pythagoreanism before or after the *Precepts* and exactly what their relevance is to the *Precepts*. The warning against heeding the opinions of the many here in the *Precepts* appears to be at least foreshadowed in the *acusmata* or *symbola*, which may come from the time of Pythagoras. One of the *acusmata* reported by Iamblichus (VP 83), which is likely to go back to Aristotle's account of the Pythagoreans (Burkert 1972: 166–7), says “do not walk on the public roads” (οὐ δεῖ τὰς λεωφόρους βαδίζειν). Originally the meaning was likely to have been religious and probably is connected to the Greek practice of putting tombs along major roads. Such roads were thus thought to be gathering places for the spirits of the dead and thus to be avoided by taking smaller paths instead (Iambl. VP 105; Böhm 1905: 45–7). At some point this *acusma* was interpreted allegorically to mean that Pythagoras prevented his associates from following the judgments of the many (ταῖς τῶν πολλῶν ἔπεσθαι γμώμας ἐκώλυνεν – Porph. VP 42). This interpretation appears in the collection of *acusmata* by Androcydes, which was in existence in the first century BC, and on which Porphyry drew. Much of this sort of interpretation may have arisen later in the tradition but some may be original (Thom 2013). It had certainly begun by 400 BC, however, when Anaximander of Miletus (the younger) wrote a book entitled *Explanation of Pythagorean Symbola* (*Suda* s.v. Anaximander; Burkert 1972: 166), but it is impossible to know when any specific allegorical reading was first proposed (Burkert 1972: 174–6). Thus, it may be that already by the end of the fifth century this *acusma* had been read allegorically and that the *Precepts* further develop that reading's emphasis on distrust of public opinion.

Delatte and Minar have tried to argue that the Pythagorean distrust of public opinion is manifested in other aspects of their philosophy.

It would appear reasonable to conclude, with Delatte, that the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* applied this distrust not just to the case of the education of the individual, which is explicitly mentioned, but also to political life and hence favored aristocracies over democracies, although this point is not made explicitly in the *Precepts* (Delatte 1922a: 55–6). It is less clear that the rejection of the views of the many and preference for the views of the few has anything to do with esoteric Pythagorean doctrines, as Minar supposed (1942: 104). The *Precepts* do not praise the opinions of the few just because they belong to the few but rather because they belong to those who know, who happen to be few. Nothing is said about the knowledge of those who know being secret.

It has been shown above that, in this section of the *Precepts*, the focus is on δόξα in the sense of “opinion” and not in the sense of “reputation” or “glory.” Nonetheless, the view that the opinions of the many are not to be heeded quickly leads to the conclusion that glory, understood as the good opinion of the many, should be avoided. Some scholars have roundly asserted that “a good reputation is hardly a Pythagorean ideal” (von Staden 1996: 409). There are a few indications that rejection of glory as a legitimate goal was a part of the Pythagorean tradition, although the evidence is late and it is hard to be sure how far back this outlook goes. Porphyry reports, on the authority of Antonius Diogenes (c. 100 AD), that Pythagoras “urged everyone to avoid the love of honors and praise” (VP 32). In the later tradition an apothegm that reflects the same view was put in Pythagoras’ mouth and reported by Stobaeus: “Do what you judge to be good, even if in doing so you are going to suffer in repute, for the mob is a bad judge of every thing that is good. Therefore, if you despise their praise, also despise their censure” (Stob. 4.5.42 – Ποίει ἃ κρίνεις εἶναι καλὰ, κἂν ποιῶν μέλλης ἄδοξεῖν. φαῦλος γὰρ κριτὴς παντὸς καλοῦ πράγματος ὄχλος. διότπερ ὦν ἂν τῶν ἐπαίων καταφρονῆς, καὶ τῶν φύγων καταφρόνει). On the other hand Edelstein (1967: 52, n. 176) pointed to a passage in Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, where Pythagoras says in praise of mental culture, in contrast to training of the body, that it lasts until death and for some even attains immortal fame after death (VP 42). The source here is likely to be Apollonius, who is late and of questionable reliability. The evidence of the *Precepts* clearly shows that glory was not a prominent goal in the Pythagorean life and that the pursuit of it was regarded with suspicion,

even if it is not explicitly ruled out as a goal. In line 37 “desires that are covetous of honor” are portrayed as one of the negative features of the age of men that can also be a problem for young men. Lines 67–9 identify the noble and the seemly (τὸ καλὸν τε καὶ εὖσχημον) as the primary goal of human action and the advantageous and the beneficial (τὸ συμφέρον τε καὶ ὠφέλιμον) as the secondary goal, with no mention of glory.

Finally, there is some evidence that δόξα played a role in Pythagorean cosmology of the fifth century and it is worth considering whether the *Precepts* have any connection to that tradition. Aristotle says that the Pythagoreans assigned a place in the cosmos to δόξα and tried to define it by associating it with a number (cf. Arist. *Metaph.* 990a23). This is probably a reference to the cosmology of Philolaus (see the commentary on καίρως in *Precepts* fr. 10). Aristotle does not say what number was associated with δόξα but Alexander, in his commentary on Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* (CAG 39.16 = Arist. fr. 203; cf. 75.22 and Asclep. in *Metaph.*, CAG 65.3), reports that the Pythagoreans identified it with the number 2 (other reports associate δόξα with the number 3: Aet. 1.3.8; Asclep. in *Metaph.*, CAG 34.30; Theon 98.3), because it is “subject to change in both directions.” This last statement is plausibly interpreted as saying that opinion can change from true to false or from false to true. The *Precepts* do not emphasize the changeability of opinion, but they do make the related point that opinions can be either good or bad and are thus twofold in nature. The *Precepts*, of course, are not dealing with cosmology. Their central concern regarding δόξα is its role in education and in particular in the education of the young as to how to live a good life. In this sphere it is of paramount importance what opinions the young heed and which they disregard. This sense that things could go either well or badly for the young, depending on which opinions they choose to follow, might be a development of the earlier emphasis on the two-fold nature of δόξα.

Section 2 – Lines 14–46: Overview of the Argument

The central topic in these lines is the problem of connecting the different ages of human life properly and not allowing them to impede one another. They place particular emphasis on the difficulty presented by the age of the young man, which is identified as the age needing most attention. The first question is what connection, if any, these lines have

with what immediately precedes them. There is no strong connection. None of the central terms of the two sections appear in the other: opinion (δόξα), the key term in the preceding lines does not appear in these lines, nor does the concept of an age group (ἡλικία), which is the topic of these lines, appear explicitly in what precedes. The only plausible connection is provided by the advice in the last line of the first section according to which the young must pay attention to the opinions of their elders. This at least introduces two age groups, the young and their elders, which might seem relevant to the three age groups that appear in the second section. This connection is not very strong, however, since the words used for the young (νέοι) and their elders (πρεσβύτεροι) at the end of the first section do not reappear in the second, and the terms used to designate the three ages in the second section (παῖς, νεανίσκος, ἀνὴρ) do not appear in the first.

The connection between these two sets of lines is thus associative. Having raised the issue of the need for the young to pay attention to the opinions of their elders, the author turns to a discussion of how to connect the various ages of life. Is this connection Aristoxenus' or Iamblichus'? Certainty is impossible, since we do not have a clear example of a transition between major sections in the material preserved in Stobaeus, who is likely faithfully to represent Aristoxenus' text but who provides only short excerpts limited to single sections. We do have lots of examples of Iamblichus' transitions and the associative style used here is certainly in accord with his practice elsewhere. That the connection is, in fact, due to Iamblichus might seem to be suggested by his introducing just here the word φασιν, "they say," thus indicating that he is reporting something from the tradition. However, in this case the "they say" does not apply to all of what follows but seems limited to the unique Pythagorean terminology in line 15 (see the commentary *ad loc.*). Thus, it remains a possibility that the transition in line 14 is Aristoxenus' and that lines 1–46 form a continuous extract from the *Precepts* (with the typical modifications by Iamblichus and his source).

The structure of the section is relatively clear. Aristoxenus starts out as if he were introducing the Pythagorean conception of the ages of human life for the first time. He calls attention to the concept of ages of life as a new topic by referring to them as "certain ages" and by providing the technical term that the Pythagoreans used to describe the relation of

these ages to life as a whole: they are ages into which life is “carved up” (ἐνδεδασμένως) like a joint of meat (see the detailed commentary). Instead of providing a list of the ages, however, he makes the point that not just anyone can connect them to one another in a coherent fashion. The word used to describe this coherence between the ages (συνείρω) is also used by Aristotle (*Metaph.* 986a3–12) to describe the coherence of Philolaus’ cosmological scheme (see the detailed commentary on line 17). Thus, the focus of the passage turns out to be the central Pythagorean concern with coherent order, but here not the order manifested in the cosmos but rather in the continuity between various ages of human life. The focus is not on what the ages are but rather the difficulty in establishing the proper continuity. This difficulty is in turn explained as resulting from the tendency of the ages to impede one another, unless a person is raised properly from birth. Two different sorts of problems in connecting the ages are then presented. Close examination of their treatment of these two problems show that the Pythagoreans were closely attuned to fourth-century controversies about education and aligned themselves with conservative critics of the ideals of radical democracy, while still staking out their own unique position.

The first problem is insuring that proper training of one age is carried over to the next and not allowed to lapse. A great part of the noble, temperate and manly training of the child should be handed down to the youth and the similar training of the youth should be handed down to the man. The proper connection of the ages is contrasted with what happens among the many, where all the rigorous training of the child is abandoned once it becomes a young man, who is allowed to do whatever he wants. This complaint about the practice of the many ties the *Precepts* clearly to its fourth-century setting, since a range of conservative authors who are critical of radical democracy make exactly this complaint. The list includes Isocrates, Xenophon and Aristotle (see the commentary on lines 28–9).

The second problem in a way complements the first. Here the difficulty is not in making sure that certain things are handed on from age to age but rather in keeping the typical mistakes of one age from leaking into the adjacent age. This problem is particularly acute for the young man who can take on both the faults of the child and also the faults of the man. The young man can childishly prefer play to serious activity, while at the same time being subject to the strong passions of the adult such as

the pursuit of honor. The age of the young man is thus identified as needing the most attention of all the ages. The section then ends with two assertions that apply to all ages: 1) A human being should never be allowed to do what he or she wants, being always in need of lawful rule and supervision, 2) This is true because the animal (τὸ ζῷον) quickly degenerates into vice, if it is allowed to and is neglected. By referring to human beings as animals the text highlights their basically hubristic nature, i.e. their insolence and excess, which is assigned to them in fragment 2, where again they are described as animals.

In denying that human beings should be able to do whatever they want, the *Precepts* once again show close ties to their fourth-century context and agreement with a widespread conservative train of thought. Critics of radical democracy, such as Isocrates, Xenophon and Aristotle, frequently presented it as mistakenly believing that happiness or freedom consists in being able to do whatever one wants (see the commentary on lines 42–3). The *Precepts* clearly agree that being able to do whatever one wants is a faulty ideal. However, the Pythagorean theory of human motivation, which underlies the rejection of this ideal, is quite different from that of Plato and Aristotle. Plato followed by Aristotle argues that human beings have an innate desire to obtain what is good for themselves (see the detailed commentary on lines 42–3). The good is thus what human beings really want. This leads to Socrates' paradoxical position in Plato's *Gorgias* that people who have great political power, such as tyrants, while able to do whatever they please, are not able to do what they want (467b). The material power that they have does not give them the knowledge of what is good for them to do, which would enable them to do what they really want. Thus Plato and Aristotle are saying, in effect, that a person should be allowed to do what they really want. The Pythagoreans on the other hand do not recognize any innate human desire to obtain the good and instead argue that human beings have a basic nature, shared with animals, which leads them not to the good but rather to excess (fr. 8). If excess is what human beings really want then, so the Pythagoreans argue, human beings must never be allowed to do what they want and must always be subject to lawful supervision. Plato agrees with the Pythagoreans that human beings can be easily led astray by bad upbringing, but he thinks that basic human nature is tame (ἡμερον – *Laws* 766a), although in need of direction, whereas the Pythagoreans see human beings as animals (note τὸ ζῷον

in line 45) who are by nature not tame but impelled by basic animal hubris (fr. 8). Thus, at *Laws* 780a, when he asserts that in private as well as public life people should not be given the power to live their day as they wish (ζῆν ὅπως ἄν ἐθέλη), Plato is in broad agreement with the outlook of the *Precepts*' statement that "a human being must never be let alone to do what he wishes." Nonetheless, there is a fundamental disagreement concerning the reason for this advice. Plato argues that, without training in following the law in private matters, individuals will not easily follow the law in public matters (*Leg.* 780a), so that the crucial issue is establishing the right sort of habitual behavior, in a basically malleable and tame human nature. For the Pythagoreans, on the other hand, human nature is actively at war with attempts to impose order on it and will inevitably behave badly without an order imposed from without.

From the account of the argument given above it should be clear that the goal of this section is not to say what the different ages of human life are. Instead a certain account of the ages of human life is assumed as a basis for the discussion of problems concerning the continuity between ages. It is natural to ask whether the account of the ages that is assumed here is the same as that found elsewhere in the fragments of the *Precepts* and particularly in fragment 2. Staab argues that there are significant differences and uses these differences to suggest that this section of fragment 9 is largely the work of Iamblichus with some reminiscences of Aristoxenus rather than being derived directly from Aristoxenus' *Precepts* (2002: 400–2). He cites a passage from Iamblichus' *Letter to Sopatrus on the Education of Children* and argues that Iamblichus' pedagogical ideals as expressed in that letter shine through in this section of fragment 9; however, any similarity is of the most general sort. There is nothing in Iamblichus' letter about the proper connection of the ages, which is the central concern of this section of fragment 9, and none of the characteristic language of the letter quoted by Staab (2002: 401) appears in fragment 9. Nor is there anything in fragment 9 of the ultimate goal of education according to Iamblichus, the truth, which consists in the understanding of the true cause of all things (Dillon and Polleichtner 2010: 42, lines 32, 37, 39). Staab appears to make the mistaken assumption that fragment 9 is a vague reflection of fragment 2 rather than considering the possibility that it comes from a different part of the *Precepts* and that fragment 2 and fragment 9 are distinct

discussions of the ages of human life that serve different purposes in the *Precepts*.

The theory of ages assumed in fragment 9 is consistent with the theory put forth in fragment 2 but is using that theory for different purposes and thus focuses only on specific aspects of it rather than setting it out again as a whole. Most notably fragment 9 only refers to three ages rather than the four found in fragment 2. It is important to note, however, that the names given to the three ages mentioned in fragment 9 are identical to those used for the first three ages in fragment 2 (παῖς, νεανίσκος, ἀνὴρ). The difference between the two fragments is that fragment 9 says nothing about the age of old men, for which fragment 2 uses both πρεσβύτης and γέρον. This hardly need mean that fragment 9 thought that there were only three ages of human life. The focus of the fragment is on the difficulty of connecting the ages together and the tendency for vices from one age to leak into the neighboring age. Clearly for these purposes the discussion of the first three ages is most relevant, particularly because the age of the young man is especially problematic in these respects. The focus of fragment 9 is thus on the education needed in order to ensure the proper connection of the ages of human life which leads to a properly functioning adult. The Pythagoreans presumably also recognized that there were distinct problems associated with old age and the transition from the age of the man to the age of the old man, but that is simply not the focus of this section of the *Precepts*.

A second difference between the theories of the ages in this section of fragment 9 and fragment 2 is that the latter sets out the prescribed activities for each age (e.g., the child is to be trained in letters and other studies, the young man is to be exercised in laws and customs, etc.), while the former does not discuss the specific content of the activities for each age but rather the manner in which the activities are carried out and its effect on the character of the person (e.g., the training is to be noble, temperate and manly). Again there is no inconsistency between this section of fragment 9 and fragment 2 on these points; they are simply discussing different aspects of the theory of age groups.

Something similar occurs in the next section of fragment 9 where only two age groups are mentioned, the age of the child and the age of the man. The point being made here is similar to the one made in the second section of fragment 9, which we have been discussing, i.e. that the training of the child should carry over into later ages, although it is

this time applied to the particular case of food. In making this specific point, the *Precepts* simply skip over the age of the young man and talk more schematically about the necessity of connecting the eating habits of the child with the eating habits of the adult. It would have been possible to include the eating habits of the young man in this discussion so that the temperate eating habits of the child are first carried over into the age of the young man and then into the age of the man, but the *Precepts* instead make the point more directly by leaving out the intervening step of the young man. Thus, the use of just two ages in this passage need not suggest that the *Precepts* are here working with a two-age theory as opposed to the four-age theory of fragment 2.

In addition to sharing identical names for the first three ages, section 2 of fragment 9 and fragment 2 also agree on one important point. Each age is to maintain its own proper activity and not behave in the manner appropriate to another age. Fragment 2 makes this point by saying that children should not act like infants, and young men should not act like children, etc. whereas section 2 of fragment 9 warns that the mistakes of the child and the mistakes of the man can both flow into the age of the young man, and it is implied that this illegitimate mixing of the ages should be avoided. For more discussion of the theory of ages of human life in the *Precepts*, see the commentary on fragment 2.

Section 3 – Lines 46–59: Overview of the Argument

This section consists of three sentences. The first reports that the Pythagoreans often raised a difficulty as to why we accustom the young to an orderly diet and teach them that order is a good thing. The second explains what they saw as problematic about this practice, i.e. that if nothing of this training is found useful for adults, then it is pointless to accustom the young to such a discipline. The unstated assumption here is that most people do not expect adults to observe the same sort of discipline as children. Finally, in the third sentence the folly of this human practice is heightened by comparison with the practice regarding domesticated animals, which are trained from the beginning in the things that they will be expected to do as adults. Since this section focuses on the training of one of the age groups, children, and the relation of that

training to a later age group, adults, it clearly fits in a general way with the preceding material and its emphasis on connecting the age groups properly. On the other hand there is no organic connection with what immediately precedes and there is also a notable difference from the preceding section in that only two age groups are mentioned, children and adults, and the intervening age group of young men, which had been a central feature of the preceding discussion is here omitted. Thus the content of the section might lead us to suspect that Iamblichus is now drawing on a different section of the *Precepts* and this suspicion is supported by structural features of the passage.

There are two strong indications that Iamblichus is not continuing to quote from the same passage of the *Precepts* as the preceding section but is here introducing a related passage from elsewhere in the *Precepts*. First, he revives the double indirect statement that he uses through most of sections 200–13 by inserting “they said” (line 47). As I have argued above, this is best understood as equivalent to the “they say,” which he has used in lines 1 and 16 above, in order to indicate that he is presenting the report of a source without indicating precisely what that source is. Here he switches to the past tense, probably under the influence of the pervasive past tenses in the passages he is quoting from the *Precepts*. The “they say” and “they said” are equivalent to “it is reported” or “it was reported.” It makes a great deal of sense to think that Iamblichus introduces this expression again here in line 47 to indicate that he is switching to a new excerpt from the *Precepts*. This first indication is strongly supported by a second, i.e. that he now quotes a passage that is almost identical to the last four lines of fragment 2, which is preserved in Stobaeus. Since the excerpt in Stobaeus shows us that the last four lines of fragment 2 were preceded by fourteen lines, which Iamblichus does not quote here, it is clear that the material in lines 46 ff. cannot follow directly on the previous section in Iamblichus.

Staab suggests that the preceding five lines in Iamblichus (lines 42–6), are in fact a paraphrase of the first two lines of fragment 2 so that Iamblichus would have begun drawing on fragment 2 even before he quotes the last lines of the fragment virtually word for word in lines 47–51 (2002: 402, n. 989). Staab is certainly right that lines 42–6 express a similar idea to what is found in the first two lines of fragment 2, but it is much more likely that these two passages represent two different

statements of the same point of view in different contexts of the *Precepts* than that lines 42–6 are Iamblichus' own paraphrase of the beginning of fragment 2. Both statements of the view are quite distinctive, one stating that "there is no greater evil than anarchy" and the other that "a human being should never be allowed to do what he or she wants." It would be completely at odds with Iamblichus' treatment of the *Precepts* in the other cases that we can observe for him to completely suppress the distinctive language of the source and replace it with his own equally distinctive formulation. Thus, fragment 2 makes the memorable point that "there is no greater evil than anarchy" and Iamblichus found this expression memorable enough to cut out the first two lines of fragment 2 and insert them word for word in the midst of another excerpt from the *Precepts* (fr. 8, cf. *VP* 175). It would be very strange for him suddenly to think that this material should be completely recast when he turns to it again in section 203 of *VP*, although he reproduces the last four lines of fragment 2, with some changes, but mostly word for word. If Iamblichus were the sort of author who strove to avoid repetition, we might suppose that he would feel compelled to rewrite the first two lines of fragment 2 here, but he is, in fact, famous for his repetitions. It is much more likely, then, that the material in lines 42–6 came from another section of the *Precepts* and that, as argued above, Iamblichus turns to a new excerpt from the *Precepts* in line 46.

Although the text between προσφέρεσθαι in line 48 and αἰσχρά in line 51 is very close to what is found in the last four lines of fragment 2 and hence to Aristoxenus' actual wording, Iamblichus introduces this material in a different way than is found in fragment 2. In this fragment the material is introduced with the simple assertion that "they said that it was necessary," while Iamblichus introduces it more elaborately, with "they said that they often asked and raised a difficulty as to why we accustom . . ." It is possible that Iamblichus is responsible for this entirely new introductory phrase, but it seems more likely that he took everything except "they said that they" from Aristoxenus. It is natural to suppose that the material that follows lines 48–51, which parallel, largely word for word, the last four lines of fragment 2, is, in fact, the continuation of fragment 2. My suggestion then is that Iamblichus' introductory phrase is taken from what immediately followed the last sentence of fragment 2. It is of course impossible to be certain as to how fragment 2 continued, but the following sequence of thought, based on

lines 55–9 of fragment 9, seems quite plausible: 1) They said that it was necessary, right from childhood, even to have a diet that is well ordered, teaching that order . . . is fine . . . (last lines of fragment 2), 2) but they often asked and raised a difficulty as to why we accustom children to such things (lines 46–8), 3) if none of them are useful when we reach the age of a man (lines 52–4), 4) and said that it is pointless to accustom children to such order if this is the case (lines 54–5), 5) at least this is not seen to happen in the case of the other animals that are educated by men, but right from the beginning the puppy and the colt learn and are made accustomed to those things which they will have to do when they are grown (lines 56–9).

Iamblichus thus starts, so I hypothesize, with point 2 above but when he gets to the words “such things” he replaces them with material to which they refer, i.e. the material in point 1 above, paraphrasing it a little. Points 3–5 then represent the further continuation of fragment 2, which Iamblichus presents relatively faithfully except that he makes a couple of insertions. Thus, the *Precepts* are notably short on examples and it seems likely that Iamblichus inserts the examples of the drunkard and the glutton in line 52. The *Precepts* similarly do not appear to have used phrases to generalize the discussion of a specific type to other types, so that again the words “The story is the same about the other habits,” in lines 55–6, are also likely to be an insertion by Iamblichus. The comparison between human beings and other animals in lines 56–9 is paralleled by the procedure in one of the fragments preserved by Stobaeus (fragment 4, line 3) and more extensively by lines 160–176 of fragment 9 itself, so it seems likely to derive from Aristoxenus. Iamblichus’ quotation of the continuation of fragment 2 ends with this comparison, however, since the subject then changes abruptly to pleasure and Iamblichus yet again signals that he is using a new excerpt by inserting “they said” = “it was reported,” in line 60.

Section 4 – Lines 59–69: Overview of the Argument

The focus of this section is initially on pleasure but, after pleasure is rejected as an appropriate goal for human action, it ends by specifying the proper goals for action, i.e. the fine and the advantageous.

Aristoxenus first presents two negative precepts whose importance is highlighted by the use of one of his favorite phrases, “as a general rule” (see the commentary on fr. 2, line 1) before each precept: 1) “As a general rule they advised [us] to beware of pleasure” and 2) “As a general rule they advised [us] never to do anything which had pleasure as the aim.” Each of these precepts is briefly supported by a reason given in a clause introduced by γάρ. We are to beware of pleasure because nothing so trips us up or throws us into error. We are never to do anything with pleasure as an aim because this aim is, for the most part, unseemly and harmful. The Pythagoreans then provide positive advice as to what the goals of our actions ought to be. We should aim most of all at the fine and the seemly in doing whatever must be done and secondarily we should aim at what is advantageous and beneficial. The section then ends with the cautionary note that determining what is fine, seemly, advantageous and beneficial requires no ordinary judgment.

Two aspects of the Pythagorean position on pleasure and the proper goals of action should be noted. First, although they assert that pleasure more than anything else leads us to error, the Pythagoreans do not say that every pleasure is bad. To the assertion that pleasure is a harmful and unseemly goal they add the crucial qualification, “for the most part” and thus clearly recognize that some pleasures can be pursued without any negative results. There is, however, no hint of how the Pythagoreans might want to distinguish between pleasures that are harmful and pleasures that are not. There is, for instance, no indication of a distinction between bodily pleasures and intellectual pleasures or the pleasures of friendship. The basic position seems to be that pleasure in itself is such a dangerous emotion that, even if some pleasures are harmless; the safest procedure is never to make it the goal of action.

Second, the Pythagoreans do not appear to be eudaimonists. They do not identify happiness of some sort as the primary goal of action. The primary goal is, instead, what is fine and seemly. In light of other fragments of the *Precepts* it appears likely that “the fine and seemly” was determined by the traditional values of the community (fr. 8, lines 20–9) and by those individuals who have lived well (fr. 9, line 14). The community in question seems to be not just the Pythagorean community but the city-state as well (fr. 2, line 9). The secondary goal, what is advantageous and beneficial, is clearly not just an afterthought. In fragment 8, line 29, it is connected to another important Pythagorean

concept, what is salutary (see the commentary on fr. 2, line 2), in the assertion that abandoning traditional laws “is in no way advantageous or salutary” (οὐδαμῶς εἶναι σύμφορον οὐδὲ σωτήριον). What is advantageous, beneficial or useful is identified as an important goal in other fragments (fr. 8, line 8) and it is paired with what is fine, just as it is here, later in fragment 9 (lines 143–4) and in a crucial passage at the end of fragment 2, where order and due proportion are praised as both fine and advantageous (καλὰ καὶ σύμφορα). It is not precisely clear what is meant by the advantageous, beneficial and useful. It does not seem likely that the Pythagoreans were referring to simple material gain, e.g., money and possessions. Later on in fragment 9, desire for excessive possessions is clearly seen as an evil (e.g., lines 98–100). Instead the connection with the salutary suggests that the Pythagoreans understood the advantageous to be that which lays the foundations for fine and seemly action. Thus, health in the body and order in the soul might be sought as advantageous in that these are necessary conditions for performing acts that are fine and seemly. In fragment 5 the Pythagoreans refer to what the many call the love of the fine and beautiful as concerned with things necessary and useful for living. These things, which presumably include food, clothing and housing, are clearly rejected as the proper objects of the true love of the fine and beautiful but they are not dismissed as totally without value. Instead they are described as “the spoils” of true love of the fine and beautiful. Thus, they are worth having to some extent but should not be our primary goal and in fact will be ours if we pursue the primary goal. Here in fragment 9 the point is that our ultimate goal is fine and seemly actions but that the advantageous and beneficial is a legitimate secondary goal, in so far as it enables us to pursue the primary goal. On the other hand, we should never make pleasure the goal.

It is important to note how far removed the Pythagorean discussion of the goals of life is from what is found in Plato and Aristotle (see also [Chapter 10](#) of the Introduction). It is true that the *Precepts* share the basic idea of aims in life to which we direct our efforts with a text like Book 1 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, where Aristotle stresses that knowledge of the final end of our actions will enable us to attain what is fitting, like archers aiming at a target (σκοπὸν – 1094a24). However, while the *Precepts* urge that we aim most of all at “what is fine and seemly” there is no argument, such as we find in Aristotle, that this is the final end nor is

this end identified with happiness as it is in Aristotle. Aristotle agrees with the *Precepts* in rejecting pleasure as an appropriate end (*EN* 1095b15–20; 1109b7–8), but the *Precepts* have nothing that corresponds to Aristotle's discussion of honor or virtue as an end. The word virtue, indeed, appears nowhere in the *Precepts*. Nor is there anything like Plato's discussion of three types of good in Book 2 of the *Republic*, goods that are desired for their own sake, goods that are desired for their own sake and for what results from them, and goods that are desired just for their results (357b–c).

Most commentators on this passage have cited Archytas' views on pleasure as reported by Cicero (*De Sen.* 12.39–41) as a parallel (e.g., Deubner 1975: 211). In that passage Archytas is reported to have said that “no more deadly curse had been given to men by nature than bodily pleasure,” which is certainly in agreement with the assertion here in the *Precepts* that “nothing so trips us up nor throws us into error as this feeling.” Moreover, in another passage in Cicero (*De Am.* 23.88), Archytas, like the *Precepts* seems to allow that some pleasures under certain circumstances are acceptable, such as certain intellectual pleasures (Huffman 2005: 295). None of Archytas' central discussion of pleasure as reported in the *De Senectute* can be paralleled in the *Precepts*, however. Archytas' point is that reason is the best part of human beings and that there is nothing so opposed to reason as pleasure. In order to demonstrate this he presents a famous thought experiment, asking us to imagine someone who is experiencing the most intense of pleasures and then expecting us to agree that in this state the person is not able to think rationally about anything (Huffman 2005: 331–7). There is nothing at all about this opposition between reason and pleasure in the *Precepts* let alone any allusion to Archytas' distinctive thought experiment. It seems best to suppose then that Archytas and the *Precepts* both adhere to a basic Pythagorean distrust of pleasure which indeed goes back to the beginnings of the school (see below), but that Archytas' argument is his own distinctive contribution, which is not shared with the *Precepts*.

This is another case in which the *Precepts* appear to develop a view found earlier in the Pythagorean *acusmata*, which may go back to Pythagoras himself. Thus in the list of *acusmata* given by Iamblichus, which is probably based on a collection by Aristotle (Burkert 1972: 166–7), is found the assertion that “Toil is good, but pleasure in every

way bad” (Iambl. VP 85). To this *acusma* is immediately added the explanation “for having come for punishment it is necessary to be punished.” This appears to be an allusion to religious beliefs such as we find in Empedocles, according to which our souls are of divine origin and have been born into mortal life in order to be punished for transgressions (fr. 115 DK). Thus, mortal life is supposed to be a punishment. It is not clear when this explanation was added to the basic *acusma* about pleasure. Many such explanations are not original and are likely to be later attempts to make sense of what were originally simple prohibitions but some may be early (Burkert 1972: 174; Thom 2013). Whether the explanation of the avoidance of pleasure in terms of beliefs about transmigration is original or not, what is unusual is that there is no trace of transmigration or of the conception of life as a punishment in the *Precepts*. Similarly, there is no statement that toil is good or that life should be devoted to toil, an idea which is also found in another *acusma* quoted by Iamblichus according to which one should not help a person to unload but only to load up, “for one should not be responsible for someone not toiling” (Iambl. VP 85). The *Precepts* do mention toil in one passage but do not use it as a general description of life but rather as a tool for a specific purpose. The Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* employ it in order to keep the minds of the young off sex (fr. 9, 129–32). Thus, the *Precepts* agree with the *acusma* that pleasure is generally bad, although they stop short of saying that it is “in every way bad” and, perhaps pointedly, say instead that it is “for the most part,” harmful and unseemly. This wariness about pleasure, however, is based solely on moral grounds, i.e. that pleasure is more likely than anything else to lead us into error, with no allusion to beliefs about the fate of the soul. Gosling and Taylor (1982: 10–11) are thus probably right to say that the Pythagoreans of the *acusmata* as reported in Iamblichus VP 85 do condemn all bodily pleasure on the basis of the doctrine of reincarnation but mistaken not to distinguish this view from that of the *Pythagorean Precepts* found in Iamblichus VP 204, which is much more nuanced.

It thus appears that the *Precepts* do represent an attempt to present a rational moral explanation for what was originally a simple prohibition but which was given a religious interpretation in terms of punishment of the soul by later Pythagoreans already in the fifth and fourth centuries. On the other hand, the evidence suggests that this attempt was the

work of the Pythagoreans with whom Aristoxenus associated and whose views he is reporting in the *Precepts* rather than the work of Aristoxenus himself. If Aristoxenus were responsible for introducing this more rational account of pleasure, we would surely expect that he would present an account that reflected some of the significant advances in the conception of pleasure that can be found in Plato's *Philebus* and Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Yet, one of the other prominent features of this brief account of pleasure in the *Precepts* is that it is totally innocent of the sophisticated discussion of pleasure found in these two works. There is no trace of Aristotle's conception of pleasure as a completion of an activity (*EN* 1174b23) or of the distinctions that Plato develops in the *Philebus* between true and false pleasures (36c–53c). It is, of course, dangerous to assume that what is preserved here in fragment 9 about pleasure is all that was said about the topic in the *Precepts*, and there may have been a more detailed discussion of the topic in sections that have been lost. Nonetheless, we can only base conclusions on the evidence available. On the basis of that evidence, the *Precepts* make most sense as the work of Pythagoreans of the early fourth century, who are trying to put the Pythagorean way of life on a more rational footing but who are not influenced by the explosion of sophistication in the understanding of pleasure, which starts in the late fifth century and blossoms as the fourth century goes on.

A passage in Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras* suggests that the Pythagorean view of pleasure developed even further after the *Precepts*. In paragraph 39 pleasure is identified as a third legitimate object of pursuit, the fine and the advantageous having been identified as the first two. These first two are, of course, parallel to the two goals identified here in the *Precepts*. One might, then, wonder whether this whole part of paragraph 39 of Porphyry, including its account of pleasure, in fact goes back to Aristoxenus. However, it seems unlikely that, after first asserting that one must never do anything aiming at pleasure, the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* would then identify pleasure as a third legitimate goal of pursuit. Indeed it would appear that the passage in Porphyry is a later development under the influence of Aristotle's three-fold division of objects of pursuit (see the commentary on lines 68–9 below). As indicated above, the *Precepts* do hint, however, that pleasure is only for the most part harmful, so it may be that someone later in the Pythagorean tradition explicitly developed a point of view according to which

pleasure could in some circumstances be pursued and based this point on a distinction between two different sorts of pleasure such as is found in paragraph 39 of Porphyry. The popular sort of pleasure that bewitches us by appealing to our stomach and sex drive is compared to the man-destroying songs of the Sirens and rejected, while the pleasure found in what is noble, just and necessary for life is said to be secure and free from blame and likened to the harmony of the Muses. Nothing in what survives of the *Precepts* suggests that this distinction between types of pleasure was already found there. Indeed, the passage in Porphyry suggests that pleasures associated with the necessities of life are to be pursued, whereas fragment 5 of the *Precepts* seems to take a more negative view of the necessities of life. It rejects the common view according to which the love of the beautiful and fine has to do precisely with what is necessary and useful for life in favor of the view that what is truly beautiful and fine is found in practices and knowledge. For more discussion of the Pythagorean view of pleasure see the commentary on fragment 3.

Section 5 – Lines 71–122: Overview of the Argument

This section focuses on the Pythagorean conception of desire. Its first nine lines are in many cases verbally identical to and certainly derived from the same part of the *Precepts* as fragment 3, which is preserved by Stobaeus. There are important questions as to how these first nine lines relate to the immediately preceding discussion of pleasure in lines 59–69 as well as to how they relate to the following forty-three additional lines of discussion of desire (80–122), which do not overlap with fragment 3. With regard to the first question, certainly the topics of pleasure and desire are closely connected conceptually and it seems quite plausible that they were treated in close proximity in the *Precepts* so that the treatment of desire may have followed closely on that of pleasure in a way similar to what is presented by Iamblichus. However, there is little explicit connection made between this section on desire and the preceding section on pleasure; pleasure is not mentioned once in the discussion of desire in lines 71–122 and desire is not mentioned in lines 59–69, which focus on pleasure (desire is mentioned briefly earlier in line 36, in the discussion of age groups). The one important overlap between the

two sections concerns the concept of the “unseemly” or “shameful” (ἀσχήμων), although this is obscured by Iamblichus’ alteration of the discussion of desire as found in fragment 3. Pleasure is identified as a goal that is “for the most part unseemly (ἀσχήμονα) and harmful” (lines 65–6). In the discussion of desire in fragment 3, as preserved in Stobaeus, “the unseemly” or “shamelessness” (ἀσχημοσύνη) is identified as one of “the three most well-known kinds of mistaken desires” and certain desires are said to be in themselves “unseemly/shameless (ἀσχήμων), vulgar and servile” (fragment 3, lines 8–9). Iamblichus leaves out this list of the types of mistaken desires, but fragment 3 shows that it was in the text of the *Precepts*; it is thus clear that desires for most pleasures were regarded as mistaken. It is thus possible that, in the original text of the *Precepts*, the material in lines 71–122 of Iamblichus’ account did follow immediately on the material dealing with pleasure in lines 59–69. If so, Aristoxenus appears to have used a rather loose way of structuring successive sections, without making clear transitions that linked topics. On the other hand, the section on pleasure is extremely short as reported by Iamblichus. It seems quite likely that more was said on this topic in the *Precepts* and that Iamblichus has left out further discussion of pleasure that occupied a place between lines 69 and 71. This second option seems more likely, not just because of the lack of any explicit connection between the discussion of pleasure and the discussion of desire, but also because Iamblichus again introduces his awkward “they said that those men say” to reinforce the indirect statement at precisely the point where the topic switches to desire from pleasure, which may indicate that he is proceeding to a new excerpt of the *Precepts*, which is not continuous with what precedes.

How are we to understand the relationship between the material on desire quoted from the *Precepts* by Stobaeus in fragment 3, which corresponds closely with what Iamblichus presents in the first nine lines of his report on the Pythagorean account of desire (lines 71–9), and the rest of the discussion of desire presented by Iamblichus in lines 80–122? Since Stobaeus is an excerptor and does not generally intervene in the excerpts in a prominent way, the natural assumption is that something like fragment 3 lay before Iamblichus or his source as well as a continuation of the discussion of desire that went beyond Stobaeus’ excerpt. Iamblichus’ text is indeed clearly based on the first six lines of fragment 3. The first fifteen words of the definition of desire that

Iamblichus gives are identical to what is found in Stobaeus. Iamblichus has slightly rewritten the text elsewhere in a fashion that does not alter the sense in any significant way. For example, instead of “presence of a sensation” Iamblichus has “presence of a sensation of some things.” Iamblichus’ greatest divergence is in reordering the sequence of sentences. Whereas fragment 3 starts in the second sentence by remarking that desire is “complex” and then in the third sentence distinguishes between acquired and inborn desires before turning to the definition of desire, Iamblichus moves the definition of desire to the second sentence, right after the introductory sentence. He then includes the second sentence of fragment 3 on the complexity of desire with only minor changes and starts on the third sentence of fragment 3 mentioning desires that are acquired. He cuts off the third sentence, however, before getting to the inborn desires that contrast with the acquired desires. Either this is a simple textual error, with the reference to inborn desires having fallen out, or Iamblichus has made a conscious choice to focus on the problematic acquired desires and not make explicit reference to a class of inborn desires, although his following discussion assumes that some desires are natural. Finally, Iamblichus drops the last six lines of fragment 3, which contain the threefold classification of mistaken desires, although the following lines in Iamblichus deal with certain sorts of mistaken desires.

It would appear then that Iamblichus thought the distinction of the three different types of mistaken desire was not necessary for his purposes and examination of the material that Iamblichus goes on to present on desire confirms this supposition. Immediately after he stops following fragment 3, with the mention of acquired desires, Iamblichus presents a natural conclusion which follows from what has been said about desire up to this point: “wherefore indeed this emotion is in need of the greatest care, guarding and no ordinary training.” This conclusion would make perfect sense if added to the end of fragment 3, so that a reasonable hypothesis would be that, after following the first six lines of text presented in fragment 3 fairly closely, Iamblichus simply removed the mention of inborn desires and the threefold classification of mistaken desires and returned to the text of the *Precepts* with this concluding clause, which followed directly on what is found in fragment 3. What follows next in Iamblichus and certainly could well have followed in the actual text of the *Precepts* is a further clarification of the distinction

between acquired and natural desires, which contrasts natural desires for filling (e.g., a desire for food when the body is empty) and emptying with acquired desires for superfluous, extravagant and luxurious items of various sorts (lines 82–9). The tendency for humans to generate these acquired desires is then explained in terms of the tendency of desire “never to stop but to advance without limit” (lines 92–3), which is further illustrated in terms of the superfluous desires that grow up among the rich. At this point Iamblichus turns away from the distinction between natural and acquired desires to focus on a second point that had been made in the introductory lines on desire (lines 77–8 = fr. 3, lines 1–2), its complex variety (103). The complex variety of desires is illustrated by the incredible range of foods and drinks pursued by human beings (104–10). Then the danger of this complexity of desires for food is illustrated by pointing out that each food or drink produces its own distinctive condition in human beings with the result that the human race “shows a mad multiplicity of motions of the soul” (lines 110–11). The passage then ends by stressing the importance of knowing the effects of food and drink on the soul.

Throughout the discussion of acquired desires and the complexity of desires there are examples of mistaken desire, but the language used in lines 82–122 shows that these lines are developing the points about acquired desire (ἐπίκτητον – line 87) and the complexity of desire (ποικιλώτατον – line 103, ποικιλίαν – line 105) made in the introductory remarks and are not primarily a discussion of the three types of mistaken desire. It may well be that the *Precepts* went on after line 122 precisely to discuss the mistaken desires in more detail. Whether they did or not, it is now possible to see why Iamblichus dropped the mention of the three types of mistaken desire. Either he thought them not needed, since they were not developed later in the *Precepts*, or, and this seems more likely, they were developed but in a section that Iamblichus chose not to quote. It was exactly because he chose not to quote the further discussion of the three types of mistaken desire that he eliminated reference to them in the introductory lines on desire that otherwise correspond to fragment 3.

The basic principles of the Pythagorean account of desire, which are in part repeated in lines 71–9 here, are set forth in fragment 3 and are discussed in the commentary on that fragment. Lines 80–122 here in fragment 9 further explain those basic principles in a way that allows us to form the following picture of the Pythagorean understanding of

desire. We are born with certain desires, and lines 82–3 confirm that these inborn desires such as the desire for food when we are “empty,” i.e. hungry, are natural (φυσικόν) and can be legitimately satisfied. The case is different with acquired (ἐπίκτητον – line 87) desires. These acquired desires are consistently labeled as for things that are superfluous (περιέργου – lines 85–6). These desires are not just for food but also for things like clothing, bedding, housing, dining services, drinking cups and even servants. The emergence of superfluous desires in human life stems from the nature of desire itself, which is such as never to stop but to go on without limit (lines 92–3). This characteristic of human desire is a manifestation of what fragment 8 of the *Precepts* identified as humanity’s basic hubristic nature. Indeed, when the Pythagoreans affirm the basic hubristic nature of human beings in fragment 8, they immediately go on to mention one of the central points in their account of desire, namely that a human being “shows a complex variety (ποικίλον) in its . . . desires” (fr. 8, lines 13–14). Thus, the Pythagoreans show a decided ambiguity with regard to what is natural. On the one hand, desires that are born with us (συμφύτους – fr. 3, line 3) are natural and should be gratified, on the other hand, our desires are such by nature as to not stand still but to expand without limit. Thus, we must be trained from youth so that our desires do not expand without limit but remain limited to those we are born with (93–6). We must be trained to despise those who get bound up in desires and in particular we must be able to detect and avoid the desires that arise among those who have power, since power precisely allows our basically hubristic nature full scope to pursue superfluous and harmful desires (96–8).

In the case of food and drink the tendency of desire to grow without limit is clear in the unlimited multitude of vegetable products employed by humans for food as well as the great variety of meats that are eaten, so that there is virtually no animal of land, air or sea that human beings do not taste (107–9). At this point, a still further complication regarding the role of desire in human life arises. Desire is not only dangerous because in its own nature it is likely to advance without limit and lead us to superfluous desires, but also because some of the objects at which desire is particularly directed, food and drink, when indulged in, have a direct effect on the psychic condition of the human being. The Pythagoreans are emphatic that each of the things we eat and drink is responsible for a distinct condition within us (lines 112–13 and 118–19). The condition

produced by continued drinking of wine is clear, but each item of food and drink similarly produces its own distinct condition, although these conditions are less commonly noticed. The conditions are clearly mostly psychic conditions because the Pythagoreans assert that the wide range of foods and drinks makes the human race show “a mad multiplicity of motions of the soul” (110–11). Thus, the young must be instructed not only on what things are natural to desire but also what things should be eaten and how much of each thing (lines 119–120). Ethics and medicine thus become part of the same science. Both are directed at controlling human desires. The ethicist proceeds by determining which desires are inborn and not superfluous, while the doctor tries to encourage us to eat the foods that are likely to produce the right motions in the soul. Diet is an important issue not just here in the discussion of desire, but it is also emphasized in the discussion of child-rearing (fr. 9 lines 48–51 = fr. 2; children should have a rearing that includes a well-ordered diet; fr. 9, lines 129–132; boys and girls should have a diet fitted to a life of toil, temperance and patient endurance) and in the discussion of procreation (fr. 4 = fr. 9 lines 153–6; we should not engage in sex when overfull or having eaten the wrong things).

The *Precepts* thus suggest that dietetics was a central science for the Pythagoreans. This fits very well with the report elsewhere in Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (163=244) that the Pythagoreans especially approved of that part of medicine that dealt with diet. It is also worthy of note that this same passage describes the Pythagoreans as “particularly precise” (ἀκριβεστάτους) about diet, since this is very much what is suggested by the assertion here in the *Precepts* that “everything that is eaten or drunk is responsible for a distinct condition” (lines 118–19). Some scholars have, in fact, argued that section 163 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* derives from Aristoxenus (Rohde 1871–2 = 1901: 156; followed by DK 58D1; Burkert 1972: 262; Zhmud 2012a: 185) and the similarity between what is said there about diet and what is said here in the *Precepts* might give further support for this idea. However, Rohde, who is the only scholar to give any extended argument, bases his case on the supposed similarity between section 163 and fragment 26 of Aristoxenus, where he is reported to have said that the Pythagoreans practiced purification of the body through medicine and of the soul through music. But the point of similarity is too general (that the Pythagoreans honored both music and medicine) to be compelling. The similarity of section

163 to what the *Precepts* say about diet is, in fact, stronger. Nonetheless, the similarity between 163 and passages securely identified as by Aristoxenus (fr. 26 and this section of the *Precepts*) is just too general for one to be confident that 163 is based specifically on Aristoxenus rather than some other source for Pythagorean views, which might itself be based on Aristoxenus or not.

Edelstein constructed his view of Pythagorean medicine from a combination of Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* 163 and the *Precepts* (1967: 21–5). In particular he argues, in accordance with his general thesis that the *Hippocratic Oath* is a Pythagorean document, that the description of dietetics in the oath is peculiarly Pythagorean. His main argument for this latter point is that the *Oath* combines dietetics with morality, as do the Pythagoreans in the *Precepts*. I have shown above that the *Precepts* combine morality and dietetics by suggesting that different foods produce different states of the soul, so Edelstein seems right in his characterization of the *Precepts*. The connection to the *Oath* is more problematic. In the *Oath* the doctor swears that he will “apply dietetic measures for the benefit of the sick” and then adds that he will keep the sick “from harm and injustice.” Edelstein takes these two points as closely connected and argues that the harm and injustice mentioned in the oath are the harm and injustice inflicted by the patient on himself through improper diet. This is problematic because the *Precepts* never talk of dietetics in terms of justice and injustice. Moreover, in the *Oath* the mention of harm and injustice is parallel in construction with benefit (ἐπ’ ὠφελείῃ . . . ἐπὶ δηλήσει δὲ καὶ ἀδικίῃ), which surely suggests that the harm and injustice involved are the result of medical treatment, as is the benefit. The doctor is promising that he will prevent diet from being used for harm or injustice by himself and by other doctors; he will not use quack cures or allow anyone else to do so. This is a principle that any Hippocratic doctor could ascribe to and has no peculiar connection to the *Precepts*. Diet is the most widely used method of treatment in the Hippocratic corpus (see, e.g., the numerous treatises on regimen; Zhmud 2012a: 353) and the Pythagoreans are hardly unique in emphasizing it, although they may be more exacting than most Hippocratics by insisting that the peculiar effect of each food must be understood.

There are a number of other fragments and testimonia regarding Pythagorean views on medicine and disease and it is important to compare these with what we find in the *Precepts*. However, before

doing so it is crucial to recognize that the passages in the *Precepts* concerning diet that we have been discussing are not explicitly presented as part of a theory of disease or, indeed, in a discussion of medicine. The word medicine and the word for disease do not appear anywhere in the fragments of the *Precepts*. Diet is introduced primarily as part of the discussion of desire and secondarily in the discussion of procreation and child-rearing. In none of these cases is physical disease the focus. Instead the focus is on the influence of diet on the soul. The one indication that what the *Precepts* have to say about the influence of diet on the soul would have analogous applications to the health of the body is the comment in lines 119–22 that it is a matter of great skill to determine what and how many things should be used for nourishment, and that Apollo, Paian and Asclepius were the founders of such knowledge. The appeal to the traditional deities associated with medicine naturally calls to mind the extensive use of diet to cure physical disease in Hippocratic medicine. It could be, then, that somewhere else in the *Precepts* there was a discussion of diseases of the body. However, it seems more likely that the *Precepts* are here consciously going beyond the traditional use of diet to cure physical disease to argue that the real importance of diet is its influence on the soul, and did not offer any separate discussion of the diseases of the body.

In fragment 27 (Athenaeus 2.47b), Aristoxenus reports that the diet of the Pythagoreans was bread and honey and that those who always ate it for lunch never got ill. Both Iamblichus (VP 97) and Porphyry (VP 34) similarly report that the Pythagoreans and Pythagoras respectively ate bread and honey for lunch, and it is possible that Aristoxenus is their ultimate source. A Pythagorean diet emphasizing bread and honey is consistent with what is said in the *Precepts*, particularly insofar as it is simple and avoids the great variety of foods that create confusion in the soul, but the *Precepts* never descend to this level of specificity. They stress the importance of diet and give some general rules, but do not mention any particular foods other than wine. It thus seems most likely that Aristoxenus' report about bread and honey did not appear in the *Precepts* but rather in one of his other books on the Pythagoreans such as *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (see [Appendix 1](#)).

It is also difficult to connect the *Precepts* in any specific way with the report found in Diodorus (10.7) that Pythagoras condemned extravagance (πολυτέλεια) as ruining not only men's fortunes but also their

bodies, since most diseases arise from indigestion (ὠμότης) and indigestion arises from extravagance. According to Diodorus, Pythagoras recommended eating only uncooked food and drinking only water. Again this concern for diet is consistent with the *Precepts*, but the *Precepts* never mention the concept of indigestion, which is central to the view reported in Diodorus. The closest connection between the two texts is Diodorus' emphasis on extravagance and the *Precepts*' stress on avoiding what is superfluous (περίεργος). The *Precepts* do use the adjective form "extravagant" once (line 86) but to describe clothing and bedding rather than food, so that the *Precepts* and Diodorus basically use a different vocabulary. This suggests that the report in Diodorus does not derive from the *Precepts* but rather a different source. The *Precepts* do not say anything about eating only uncooked food. Drinking only water would be consistent with the idea that we should avoid superfluous food and try to escape the wild variety of different motions in the soul that is produced by eating a wide variety of food.

Some of the Pythagoreans who are the probable authors of the ideas expressed in the *Precepts* are identified elsewhere by Aristoxenus as pupils of Philolaus and Eurytus (Diog. Laert. 8.46). If this is so, the *Precepts* show surprisingly little connection to Philolaus' theory of disease. For Philolaus, excessive heat is the root cause of disease and the specific agents are bile, blood and phlegm, all of which are hot (A27; Huffman 1993: 297–8). None of these factors appear in the *Precepts*. It is true that Philolaus also added excess in nutriment as a cause of disease, which is broadly in agreement with the *Precepts*, but there is nothing in Philolaus that suggests he placed the same emphasis on understanding the precise effect of each food. The failure of the *Precepts* to mention the role of bile, blood and phlegm in causing disease, as well as the lack of any reference to indigestion or a diet of bread and honey is most probably a reflection of the point made above, i.e. that the *Precepts* are not concerned with the effect of diet on the body but rather with its effect on the soul.

The obsession with diet may perhaps be another area in which the *Precepts* build on and transform the earlier Pythagorean way of life based on the *acusmata*. One *acusma* says that the wisest thing among human beings is medicine (Iambl. VP 82). The *Precepts* similarly assert that it is a matter of great wisdom to detect what sort and how many things should be used for nourishment (lines 119–120). Moreover, they maintain that the conditions under which people procreate, and the conditions

under which children are raised, have the greatest influence on whether human beings are virtuous or vicious (lines 173–6) and a central issue in both procreation and child-rearing is diet (lines 153–8 and 46–51). The *acusmata* are filled with very precise dietary taboos, such as not to eat the heart or womb of an animal (Diog. Laert. 8.19), not to sacrifice (and presumably eat) a white cock (Iambl. *VP* 84), and not to eat certain fish such as the black-tail (Diog. Laert. 8.19). A number of scholars have quite reasonably supposed that Pythagorean medical dietetics such as we find here in the *Precepts* represent a rationalization of these earlier irrational taboos (Wehrli 1951: 59, Burkert 1972: 293). It is important to stress, however, that this is just a conjecture, however plausible. There is no specific overlap between the *Precepts* and the earlier *acusmata*; the *Precepts* do not refer to any of the *acusmata* and do not specify any of the foods mentioned in the *acusmata*. Indeed, Zhmud argues that Pythagorean dietetics did not arise from the taboos, which, he argues, in many cases may have been later, but rather were an expansion of the rational medical technique of doctors who dealt with wounds in war and injuries to athletes (2012a: 363–5). However, even Zhmud admits that the early Greeks attributed internal diseases to the gods (2012a: 354). The dietary taboos found in the *acusmata* find many parallels precisely with taboos in religious ritual (Burkert 1972: 177), so it is surely plausible to see them as belonging to the early period, when internal diseases were thought to have a divine origin, and hence as candidates for updating in the *Precepts*. Thus, in both their general emphasis on the importance of diet and in their stress on attention to the effect of each individual type of food, the *Precepts* can be seen as the rationalized heir of the *acusmata*.

Finally, it is noteworthy that while the *Precepts* clearly indicate that certain sorts of meats just as certain sorts of vegetables ought to be avoided because of their effect on the soul, there is no suggestion that all meat should be avoided or that the Pythagoreans were vegetarians. Indeed the discussion of meat eating in lines 107–9 is parallel to the discussion of the eating of vegetables in lines 105–6; the rhetoric of these passages clearly shows that there is no problem with eating meat or eating vegetables as such but rather with eating an indiscriminate variety of meats and vegetables without recognizing that some of them produce undesirable conditions in the soul. Such a view on diet would certainly be in accord with Aristoxenus' reports that Pythagoras himself ate certain sorts of meat and that he in fact ate beans because of their

salubrious effects on the body (fr. 25). It is also reported in both Iamblichus (VP 98) and Porphyry (VP 34) that the Pythagoreans and Pythagoras respectively did eat the meat of sacrificial victims. Aristoxenus might be the source for these passages (Wehrli 1967: 56), but certainty is not possible.

Section 6 – Lines 124–76: Structure

This section focuses on precepts concerning the procreation of children. The first six lines (124–9) correspond quite closely to a fragment from the *Precepts* preserved by Stobaeus (*Eclogae* 4.37.4 = fr. 4) and lines 133–8 and 153–8 also correspond to that same fragment in Stobaeus, although the intervening material and lines 160–76 at the end have no parallel in that fragment. There can thus be no doubt that the *Precepts* are a major source for this section of Iamblichus and there is a *prima facie* case for thinking that at least parts of the sections not paralleled in fragment 4 are also ultimately derived from the *Precepts*. The problem is in determining what portions of those sections are most likely to be from the *Precepts* and what portions are most likely to have been composed by Iamblichus himself or the intermediary source through which Iamblichus seems to know the *Precepts*. The first words of line 124, “Concerning generation,” follow the characteristic form that Aristoxenus used to introduce new sections in the *Precepts*: περὶ δέ with the genitive (see the note on line 1). The first question that arises is whether this section on the procreation of children, which begins in line 124, followed immediately on the discussion of desire in the *Precepts* as it does here in Iamblichus. That it did is not implausible, since sex is certainly a prominent desire, which could logically be treated after a general discussion of desire. As I have argued above in the overview of section 5, however, it seems likely that Iamblichus has omitted a detailed account of mistaken desire corresponding to the schematic introduction of the topic in lines 6–11 of fragment 3. So there is some probability that Iamblichus has left out this material on mistaken desire, which in the *Precepts* occupied a place between line 122 and line 124 of Iamblichus’ presentation.

Lines 124–9 are clearly derived from fragment 4 of the *Precepts*, although Iamblichus and/or his source have changed the word order in

the first part and altered the grammatical construction slightly in the second. The text of Iamblichus does allow us to restore the words “they thought that it was necessary,” which had fallen out of the text of Stobaeus and to restore the plural “they said” for the corruption to the singular “he said” in Stobaeus (see the commentary on fr. 4). From line 129 to line 132 a single sentence appears which has no counterpart in fragment 4, although it is immediately followed by almost six lines (133–8), which again correspond to fragment 4. Given Iamblichus’ practices elsewhere, the initial assumption might be that Iamblichus has inserted a sentence from elsewhere in the *Precepts*. The vocabulary of the sentence fits very well with what we would expect from a fourth-century text like the *Precepts* (see the detailed commentary) and the beginning, δεῖν οὖν is absolutely characteristic of the *Precepts*, as can be seen by the reoccurrence of the phrase in line 135, which corresponds to what is found in fragment 4. There is thus little doubt that lines 129–32 are from the *Precepts*, but there is the possibility in this case that rather than being an insertion by Iamblichus, they did in fact occupy this place in the original text of the *Precepts* and have fallen out of Stobaeus’ text. One might be tempted to think that they fell out when a copyist’s eye skipped from δεῖν οὖν here in line 129 to δεῖν οὖν in line 135 but, if that were the case, the sentence immediately before the second δεῖν οὖν should also be missing in Stobaeus, whereas it is present. The other possibility, however, is that the copyist stopped after δεδύνηται (see fr. 4) before the first δεῖν οὖν but that the βίω at the end of the sentence starting with the first δεῖν οὖν, which he had not copied yet, caught his eye (this is the sentence that only appears in Iamblichus). When he returned to the text, he remembered the βίω but skipped down to a second appearance of βίω in line 6 of fragment 4 (Iamblichus has a slightly different construction) and just went back to the beginning of the sentence in which the second βίω appears, thus omitting exactly the sentence which is present in Iamblichus and missing in Stobaeus. The sentence does fit very well here in terms of content, since the previous sentence had stressed that the bodies of the parents need to be strong and perfected before providing seed, while the sentence in question goes on to specify that the young should be engaged in toil and exercise and have a diet that is suited to such exercise, all of which seems directed at producing strong bodies.

Lines 133–8 are again quite similar to fragment 4, although there are some differences in word order and construction. Iamblichus does leave

out two ideas that are noteworthy in fragment 4: 1) that the young should “be busy with training” and in fact so busy that 2) “they not even know of sex” before age twenty. In the midst of line 138 Iamblichus’ text abruptly diverges from fragment 4, except that it preserves the single word εὐεξία, which is the central concept in the next line of fragment 4. It seems very likely then that the rest of the sentence in which εὐεξία appears, differing radically from the text of fragment 4 as it does, was constructed by Iamblichus. Moreover, the language of the sentence fits Iamblichus’ style better than that of the *Precepts* and Iamblichus shows interest in the concept of εὐεξία elsewhere in his writings (see the detailed commentary on line 138). The next sentence provides support (γάρ) for the preceding sentence and thus is also likely to be by Iamblichus. It also uses language that is not paralleled in the *Precepts* and is more appropriate for Iamblichus (see the commentary on ἀκρασία in line 139). These lines, stretching from ἔσεσθαι in line 138 to αὐτόν in line 140, also come right before Iamblichus reaffirms the indirect statement in line 141 (ἔφασαν – “they said”). Thus, they make sense as Iamblichus’ addition at the end of one excerpt from the *Precepts*, before he goes on to another excerpt as indicated by the ἔφασαν. It is true that, if these lines are Iamblichus’ addition, it is surprising that they are presented in indirect discourse, but Iamblichus may have wanted to keep a uniformity of style in presenting what he took to be the Pythagorean position. He certainly shows little interest in clearly distinguishing his own ideas from those of his sources in other places.

It appears that in lines 139–53, which do not correspond to anything in fragment 4, Iamblichus has inserted two or three different excerpts from elsewhere in the *Precepts* before returning to a text that corresponds to fragment 4 in lines 153–8. This much cannot have fallen out of Stobaeus by any accident, so we must assume that these are insertions by Iamblichus or his source. The insertions are, however, clearly from elsewhere in the *Precepts*, as can be seen from their use of introductory phrases that are quite characteristic of the style of the *Precepts* (ὑπελάμβανον . . . δεῖν in both lines 145 and 149). The language in lines 139–53 is also for the most part more characteristic of the fourth century than the time of Iamblichus, and there are some distinctive combinations of adjectives that are characteristic of the *Precepts* (e.g., καλόν . . . σύμφορον in lines 143–4, see further the detailed commentary on these lines). In the midst of this language,

which uniformly fits the style of the *Precepts*, one glaring anachronism appears that must be an insertion by Iamblichus or his source, ἐνεργείας in line 145. A more minor change can be seen in the insertion of an explicit subject for the third person verbs (lines 145–6 – ὡς ἔοικεν, ἐκεῖνοι οἱ ἄνδρες), something never found in Stobaeus, which must again be due to Iamblichus. It could be that each of the three verbs introduced to mark indirect statement (ἔφασαν . . . ὑπελάμβανον . . . ὑπελάμβανον) indicates a new excerpt introduced by Iamblichus, so that three brief excerpts that did not originally belong together are strung together here. The first one which praises restrictions on sex in cases of incest and in public may have been inserted here because it went along with the theme of sex being restricted even after age twenty which is mentioned immediately before. The second insert does refer to generations that are contrary to nature, which could refer to the incest that was forbidden in the previous excerpt, so it might in fact be part of the same excerpt. The end of this second section gives instructions as to which children should be raised and which not. These instructions can be seen as leading naturally into the issue of how to approach the production of children, which is the explicit subject of the third excerpt beginning in line 149. So the form of lines 139–53 (the repeated verbs introducing indirect statement) suggests that there are three different excerpts, but the content leaves open the possibility that they form one continuous excerpt.

In the middle of line 153, the text of Iamblichus comes back to correspondence with the text of fragment 4, first with the appearance of some single significant words (τροφῆς . . . μεθύοντα) followed by some exact agreement in lines 156–7. Immediately before the appearance of the first correspondence, the thought of the previous excerpt is, in fact, complete (“The first and greatest precaution is that one bring oneself to the production of children having lived and still living in a temperate and healthy way”). Iamblichus or his source then grafts onto this sentence what fragment 4 went on to say after he broke away from the text in line 138. To integrate this point, that one should not engage in sex when full of food or drink, Iamblichus changes the sentence structure and the form of the words so that it will fit with the *Precept* he has just been quoting in lines 149–53. Once again since it is just a few words from fragment 4 that Iamblichus preserves here, most of the additional language is Iamblichus’ own. Not surprisingly, then, there is language here that is more characteristic of Iamblichus than the *Precepts* (see the

commentary on lines 153–6). In lines 156–7 Iamblichus starts to follow fragment 4 closely again but shortens the end of the passage by using “unsound” (μοχθηρά) rather than the much more elaborate “not . . . well-proportioned and beautiful things . . . but things that are not at all good” (εὖρυθμα καὶ καλὰ, ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ ἀγαθὰ τὴν ἀρχήν), which is found in fragment 4. To suppose that Iamblichus shortened this long and cumbersome formation to the simple “unsound” is much more plausible than supposing that Stobaeus, who is primarily an excerptor, constructed the more elaborate formation from the single word “unsound.”

Fragment 4 ends at this point so that it is impossible to tell for sure whether the *Precepts* continued with lines 160–76, which follow here in Iamblichus. Nonetheless, there are good reasons to think that lines 160–76 do come from the *Precepts* (see the detailed commentary). Most prominent of all is the possible correspondence between the καθόλου μέν in lines 124–5 and the καθόλου δέ here in line 160, which appears to bind the whole section together. Whether lines 160–76 immediately followed the material in fragment 4 or followed after some intervening material is less certain, but the correspondence to καθόλου μέν suggests that there may not have been much intervening material. The general style and vocabulary of these lines again fit the fourth century and the *Precepts* better than they do Iamblichus (see the detailed commentary), but once again there are a few phrases that must be later insertions, since they involve distinctive philosophical formulations that are unlikely to have belonged to the Pythagoreans but that make sense for Iamblichus or a source of his which originated in the Hellenistic period. Thus I have bracketed “and lead it to come to be and exist” (καὶ ἄγειν τινὰ εἰς γένεσιν τε καὶ οὐσίαν) and “as to how the arrival into being and life of those who are generated will be as fine as possible” (ὅπως ἔσται ὡς χαριστάτη τῶν γινομένων ἢ εἰς τὸ εἶναι τε καὶ ζῆν ἄφικις), as likely later insertions (see the detailed commentary).

What we find over and over throughout this passage is that with a handful of exceptions, which stand out clearly, the language corresponds very well to that of the fourth century BC, not to the technical philosophical language of that period but to the broader language of Greek prose found in the orators and historians as well. At the same time there are combinations of adjectives that find no parallels at any period,

distinctive variations of phrases common in the fourth century, and scattered words that are not common in any period. Thus the text has the characteristics of a fourth-century text with a somewhat idiosyncratic bent, which is what we might perhaps expect to find in Aristoxenus' report of the thought of fourth-century Pythagoreans.

Section 6 – Lines 124–76 and Ocellus on the Generation of Children

Iamblichus and Stobaeus are not the only witnesses to the text of section 6. The pseudo-Pythagorean text ascribed to Ocellus also preserves this same section of Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*. In the Introduction I have shown that the text preserved in Ocellus is in general agreement with the text in Iamblichus and that Iamblichus and Ocellus are drawing on a common source. Both Iamblichus and Ocellus make some changes in that source in order to make the text suit their own purposes. These changes are minor and the philosophical content of the material preserved by Iamblichus and Ocellus is essentially the same. The main changes by Ocellus were 1) to rewrite the material so that it is not presented as what they (i.e. the Pythagoreans) say but rather what Ocellus says and 2) to replace the idiosyncratic concept of “the precocious” (προφερές – line 125), which appears in both Stobaeus and Iamblichus and which must thus have been in Aristoxenus, with the more straightforward “untimely and incomplete” (ἄνωρον καὶ ἀτελές – Ocellus 52). Of course some of the differences between Iamblichus and Ocellus are due not to such conscious changes but to changes that arose in the transmission of manuscripts. In one case the text in Iamblichus is ungrammatical and corrupt (line 127) and Ocellus preserves the correct text. Other interesting textual variants from Ocellus are noted in the *apparatus criticus*.

The text of Ocellus' book ends with this excerpt from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. However, immediately preceding the excerpt, which occupies the concluding sections 52–7 of Ocellus, is another long section on the same topic, the generation of human beings (44–51). Is it possible that this material too came from the *Pythagorean Precepts*? The clear answer is no. There are two main reasons for this conclusion. First the material preserved in sections 52–7 clearly served as the section in the *Precepts* on this topic, since it begins with Aristoxenus' typical way of introducing

a topic, “concerning generation they said the following.” Sections 44–51 in Ocellus start with what is also clearly the beginning of a section on human generation “concerning the generation of human beings from one another,” and it is unlikely that the *Precepts* would have had two different sections with essentially this same beginning. Moreover, sections 44–51 indicate that the following discussion will be divided into two parts, one part dealing with how generation ought to be carried out and another by whom (ὅπως τε καὶ ἐκ τίνων), and these two parts are duly represented in sections 44–7 and 48–51 (Harder 1966: 121). Thus, sections 44–51 are a coherent whole that is completed before the second introductory phrase that begins section 52. So the structure of sections 44–57 in Ocellus clearly suggests that we have two different treatments of the same subject deriving from different sources.

The second reason suggesting that sections 44–51 do not derive from the *Precepts* is that there are notable conflicts in approach and content between 44–51 and 52–7. Of course there are some similarities. Both sections use δεῖ to indicate what must be done, but this is just a general feature of the genre of writing. Many of the ideas in the first section are compatible with what the *Precepts* say about generation but are expressed with a quite different emphasis. Thus the central point in sections 44–51 is that sex should not be pursued for pleasure but rather for procreation. The *Precepts* would agree, since they assert that human beings should do nothing for the sake of pleasure (see fr. 9 lines 64–5). Nonetheless, pleasure is not mentioned at all in the discussion of generation in the *Precepts*. Sections 44–51 argue that the ability to procreate was a gift of the gods to mortals to make up for their lack of immortality. The *Precepts* do not present procreation as a gift of the gods or as having this purpose. Again sections 44–51 stress that we should not marry for wealth or status but rather with someone suited in soul to us. Bad marriages produce discord in the household and since it is households that make up the state, bad marriages will make for a bad state. Nothing like this is found in the *Precepts*, which focus rather on the physical and psychic condition of those engaging in sex and the nature of their offspring and say nothing about the state. Thus, sections 44–51 and 52–7 read exactly like what the structure of the passages suggest, i.e. like two different treatments of the same topic. Even more significant than these differences in emphasis, however, is another idea in sections 44–51, which is antithetical to an important principle in the *Precepts*.

The suggestion that human beings are the gentlest of the creatures on the earth (cf. Plato, *Laws* 766a, *Sophist* 222c; Aristotle, *Topics* 128b17; Philo, *Who is the Heir?* 138) and thus should be encouraged to spread and multiply (section 46) is in clear conflict with the *Precepts*' strong emphasis on the basically hubristic nature of human beings (fr. 8). Finally, the diction in sections 44–51 is quite different (e.g., διαλαβεῖν 44, διαμονῆς 44, κατὰ τρόπον 43 and 47) and in some cases much later (e.g., διχοφροσύνην 49) than the typical diction of the *Precepts*. Thus both in terms of content and structure, it is clear that sections 44–51 of Ocellus do not derive from the *Precepts*.

Section 6 – Lines 124–76: Overview of the Argument

Since section 6 begins with six lines also found in fragment 4, and since lines from fragment 4 make up about 30% of the section, it is no surprise that the central argument of section 6 is the same as that of fragment 4: in the procreation of children what is precocious should be avoided, because the offspring will not be good unless the bodies of the parents are strong and fully developed. Here as in other areas “late learning” is best and children should be raised so as not to pursue sex until the age of twenty (fragment 4 optimistically says they should not even know that it exists until the age of twenty) and should engage in it only sparingly thereafter. Moreover, just as the bodies of the parents should be fully formed before attempting to produce children so even adults should not attempt to produce children when their bodies are not in good condition, e.g., when they are stuffed with food, or drunk, since parents whose temperaments are unharmonious or confused produce unsound offspring (the reader should consult the commentary on fragment 4 for further explanation of these points). The central question then is what the additional material provided in fragment 9 adds to this basic argument, which is shared with fragment 4. First, it is important to remind ourselves of two points made above: 1) there are a few lines that are likely to be composed by Iamblichus himself and which should therefore not be regarded as evidence for the original argument of the *Precepts* (most of 138–40 and parts of 161–4), and 2) lines 140–53 probably contain three different excerpts which Iamblichus combines for his own purposes (140–5, 145–9, and

149–53) so that we cannot be sure that these excerpts occurred in this order or in this place in the original text of the *Precepts*.

All of the new material that is found here is consistent with the basic outlook of the material from fragment 4, so that the whole of this section in Iamblichus is coherent in outlook. Either the material appeared in something like this form in the original text of the *Precepts*, or Iamblichus has done a very good job of integrating material from different parts of the *Precepts*. Nonetheless, the new material makes important points subsidiary to the overall outlook that enrich our understanding of the Pythagorean life in important ways. Six points stand out.

First, lines 129–32 make explicit that the life of both prospective parents, both the young man and the young woman, should be structured so as to produce healthy and fully developed bodies. Earlier, in line 102, mention was made of the excessive desires of women as well as men, so that it is clear that the Pythagoreans had women as well as men in mind as they formulated the *Precepts*. However, this is the only place in which reference is made to the training of women.

Second, lines 129–32 make clear that there are two key elements in the way of life of the prospective young parents: 1) hard work, exercise and tests of endurance and 2) a diet that is suited to such a life of toil, temperance and endurance. The specifics of the training are not given nor is it said that the training of boys and girls is identical, but clearly the same principles are to govern the training of both. The mention of a temperate life and tests of endurance show that this training was training of the soul as well as of the body. The exercise and diet are clearly designed to produce the strong and fully developed bodies that have been identified as desirable for producing good children. As fragment 4 (lines 8–10) made clear, however, the exercise and toil are also designed to keep the young busy so that they will not try to procreate until the age of twenty.

Third, in lines 140–5, the Pythagoreans are said to approve of some of the traditional limitations, largely unwritten (see the commentary on lines 142–3), which the Greek city-states put on sex, such as bans on incest and sex in temples or in public. This approval is in accord with the general Pythagorean view stated in fragment 1 that we should abide by traditional customs. We are also told why they approve of these particular customs: it is fine and advantageous to have as many hindrances to sex as possible. It seems likely that the Pythagoreans thought that it

was “fine” to have these limitations on sex because they represent an attempt to restrain the unbridled pursuit of pleasure, which the Pythagoreans condemn (see lines 64–6 above), and are a manifestation of self-control. But why are the laws on incest and so on advantageous? The Pythagoreans, of course, had no knowledge of the problems for the offspring of incestuous relations that are based on modern genetic theory. Nonetheless, their own theory is that the circumstances of conception influence the nature of the child, so they might have thought that there was unnatural lust involved in incest, which produced bad offspring. However, there is no explicit appeal to nature here. The advantage to following the customs may in the first place be simply the training in self-control for the parents, but the offspring of parents who are temperate and who beget children in an intelligent and controlled way will also be better.

Fourth (lines 145–9), the Pythagoreans thought that generations that were contrary to nature (incest) or violent and unrestrained (e.g., rape) should be stripped away and of those generations that are natural and carried out with temperance only those should be left that arise for temperate (not beyond a limited number of children?) and lawful (with your spouse?) production of children. The precise point of these lines is ambiguous. It may be that the reference is still to kinds of sex acts. We are told again that the Pythagoreans think we should do away with unnatural sex (incest) and add that violent sex such as rape should also be avoided and that, of sex that is natural and temperate, only sex that is directed at lawful and temperate production of children should be allowed. Alternatively, the focus may shift here from the sex act to the results of sex, so that the Pythagoreans are discussing what to do when conception occurs as a result of incest or rape, or indeed of any sex that is not temperate or directed at the lawful production of children. In this case the Pythagoreans would be discussing the conditions under which abortion or infanticide should be practiced. It has sometimes been thought that the early Pythagoreans prohibited abortion but there is no evidence for this (see the detailed commentary on lines 145–9). In recommending abortion in certain cases the Pythagoreans would be in the company of Plato and Aristotle, both of whom thought abortions should be employed in some circumstances (see the commentary on lines 145–9).

Fifth, not just the young but also anyone who sets out to produce children should give great forethought for their offspring (lines 149–53). The cardinal rule for this forethought agrees with what has been earlier said about the young, namely that one should come to the production of children having lived, and still living, a temperate life.

Sixth (lines 160–76), the Pythagoreans introduce the analogy between the generation of human beings and the rearing of animals. Just as those who raise dogs or birds take great care that the best offspring are produced by making sure that offspring arise from the right parents at the right time and when the parents are in the right condition, so men should take similar precautions concerning their own offspring. The passage then ends with the powerful assertion that the procreation and rearing of children haphazardly and without a plan is the greatest cause of vice and evil among men. This assertion is in agreement with other parts of the *Precepts* that maintain that anarchy is the greatest evil (fr. 2) and that human nature is prone to excess and needs to be carefully regulated (fr. 8).

The Relation Between the *Pythagorean Precepts* on the Generation of Children and Plato's and Aristotle's Accounts of the Generation of Children

In [Chapter 9](#) of the Introduction I have shown that previous scholarship has been mistaken to suppose that the parallels between Plato's *Republic* and the *Precepts* regarding the generation of children suggest that Aristoxenus derived the account in the *Precepts* from Plato. Here I will consider the evidence of Plato's *Laws* and Aristotle's *Politics*. Plato's treatment of the generation of children in the *Laws* is found in three different passages in addition to the passage banning procreation when drunk, which I have discussed in [Chapter 9](#) of the Introduction. All of these treatments differ from what we find in the *Pythagorean Precepts* in that they focus on the ideal state and the laws it should pass regarding the procreation of children, whereas, as I have noted above, the *Precepts* make no mention of an ideal state. At 721a–e Plato says that marriage laws should be the first laws in every state. The specific law that he mentions is that a man should marry when he is between the ages of thirty and thirty-five, and that if he fails to do so he will be fined. This is

the simple form of the law but he argues that a more complex form of the law, which tries to persuade people to obey it, is better. The second form argues that it is natural to procreate because this is the way that human beings attain immortality and that it would be unholy for any individual not to pursue such immortality. There is nothing in the *Precepts* that corresponds to any of these points. Indeed, the focus in the *Precepts* is entirely different. The goal in the *Precepts* is primarily to limit sex as much as possible rather than to argue for the value of procreation and to punish those who avoid it.

At 772d Plato returns to laws concerning the generation of children for a second time. Here we are told that a man should marry between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five (at 721a it was thirty–thirty-five). A man is preferably to marry a woman of moderate means, although he should not necessarily shun a poor woman nor be too ardent to marry a rich one. At 773e it is emphasized again that one should not marry for money. The general rule for all marriages is that a man should not seek to please himself in marriage but rather to benefit the state. Thus, he should avoid the natural tendency to marry someone like himself and instead choose someone who will balance his defects; if he has a quick temper he should choose someone who is calmer. Individuals should be exhorted to marriage by the argument given already at 721b–c, that it is our duty to pursue immortality through procreation, and this time Plato adds that we should also leave behind children to serve the gods. As before, we are told that if a man fails to marry by age thirty-five he will pay a fine and receive no honor from the young. Again, none of the features of the discussion so far has any parallel in the *Precepts*. It is true that one of the Pythagorean *acusmata* says that we are supposed to leave children behind to worship the gods in our place (Iamblichus, *VP* 86), and it may be that Plato is drawing on the Pythagoreans here, since the *acusmata* are usually thought to be early, but nothing to this effect is stated in the *Precepts*.

After some intervening material Plato returns to the procreation of children for a third time at 782e. He begins by asserting that human beings are governed by a threefold need and desire. These three desires are for food, drink and sex. If these desires are managed properly, goodness is the result, and if wrongly, the opposite. Human beings should turn away from what is called sweetest and towards what is best. Another triumvirate should check these desires: fear, law and true reasoning. The unruly desire for sex must be checked in marriage then,

so that the bride and groom can produce the best and most beautiful children for the state. The marriage law is then that the period of procreation should be for ten years, starting between sixteen and twenty for women and between thirty and thirty-five for men. Certain female officials are supposed to enter the house to make sure the couple is carrying out procreation in the appropriate way. Once again there are no parallels for the specifics of this discussion in the *Precepts*. There is no three-fold division of desire or of the means to check the desire. The ages for procreation and the ten-year period of procreation are also not paralleled in the *Precepts* nor are any Pythagorean officials to enter the house to check on the couple. The one point of parallel is that Plato urges that the couple should apply their minds to the planning and execution of procreation and not act carelessly (783e), just as the *Precepts* urge that those begetting children should take forethought for their future children (fr. 9, 149–51) and bemoan the fact that human beings commonly procreate without plan (fr. 9, 169–72). This is a very general point of similarity and need not suggest any relationship of dependence between the two texts. The notion that a couple should not procreate haphazardly is clearly fundamental to the general Greek tradition of procreation that I have traced above, and is particularly crucial to the Spartan social system. Thus it is overwhelmingly likely that Plato's *Laws* and the *Precepts* just represent two independent manifestations of the common idea that procreation is serious business and should not be approached in a haphazard way.

Plato comes back to sexuality again in one later passage of the *Laws*. He points out that customs regarding incest show that it is possible to check human sexual desire. People refrain from pursuing attractive men and women without complaint, if those men and women are their brothers or sisters or sons or daughters. This is because from the day of our birth we are unanimously told that such acts are unholy and an abomination to the gods. So the universal opinion of human beings is given religious support (838b–d). Similar techniques can be used to ensure that citizens of Plato's state should only engage in sex in marriage in order to produce children and prevent them from engaging in homosexual sex, which is like sowing seeds on rocks and murders the human race. Nor should a man sow seed in any female "soil" in which he does not want a child to develop. Plato then points out that famous athletes have given up sex to win athletic victory, so that surely the citizens of his

state can be convinced to give up inappropriate sex in order to win a greater victory, the victory over pleasure (840a–c). Plato then says that the citizens of his state should not be worse than wild birds and other animals who are chaste until the time to breed (840d–e). He goes on to urge that three forces can be used to make citizens engage in sex appropriately: respect for religion, the ambition to be honored and a passion for spiritual rather than physical beauty (841c). Ideally these forces would keep a man from having relations with anyone but his wife, but, if he does have such relations, he must keep them secret or he will be excluded from the honors of the state (841d–e).

Once again none of these specifics of Plato's proposals are found in the *Precepts*. The similarities are only at the most general level. The Pythagoreans like Plato mention with approval the laws against incest (140–3), but surely almost all Greeks would agree. Plato stresses the use of religion to support the ban on incest but the *Precepts* say nothing about incest being unholy or rejected by the gods. Plato and the Pythagoreans agree that sex should be infrequent (σπανίως fr. 4, line 11; σπανίῳ *Laws* 841a), but their justifications for this point and the means of bringing it about are different. The Pythagoreans say that infrequent sex is good because it contributes to the good condition of the parents (fr. 4, lines 12–13) and seem to suggest that the desire of the parents to be in good condition will thus motivate them to practice sex infrequently. Plato, on the other hand, thinks that frequent sex makes people subject to sex as a harsh mistress (δέσποιναν 841b), and it is to free ourselves from this mistress that we should practice it only rarely. He suggests that the key to achieving this is the use of a sense of shame at practicing promiscuous sex. The *Precepts* make no mention of sex as a harsh mistress nor of the use of shame to curtail it. The *Precepts* also do not propose banning homosexual sex as Plato does. They do not mention Plato's three forces that are to be used to check sexual desire. They do not draw a parallel between restraining sex for athletic victory and restraining sex for a victory over pleasure, as Plato does. The Pythagoreans do draw a parallel between raising dogs and birds and raising human children (164–7), but here in the *Laws* Plato's reference, in contrast to the *Republic*, is not to human rearing of animals but rather to wild animals. Thus, once again there is little in the *Precepts* to suggest that Aristoxenus wrote them with this passage of the *Laws* in mind.

Aristotle's account of procreation is found primarily in chapter 16 of Book 7 of the *Politics*. As noted above in Chapter 9 of the Introduction, he begins from the basic principle shared with most fifth- and fourth-century accounts of procreation, including Plato's and that of the *Precepts*, according to which the nature of the parents and the circumstances under which they couple have an important impact on the children that are born. Aristotle makes the point that the relative ages of the husband and wife must be considered as well as the age difference between the parents and their children. Parents who are too old cannot be as much help to their child nor can they benefit as much from the gratitude of their children. On the other hand, there are serious problems if parent and child are too close in age. He concludes that women should marry at age eighteen and men around the age of thirty-seven. He then goes on to suggest that the child should be conceived in the winter and that the parents should neither have the exceptionally high conditioning of an athlete nor should they be valetudinarians but rather something in between. Pregnant women should be active in body but inactive in mind. Deformed infants should be exposed. If a numerical limit on the number of children is set by the state and a woman conceives a child beyond that limit, an abortion should be induced before the onset of sensation and life. While one is a husband one should not have sex with anyone other than one's wife, whether they be male or female. There are a number of specific proposals here, and none of them finds a clear parallel in the *Precepts*.

There are, however, two areas of similarity between Aristotle and the *Precepts*. First, the Pythagoreans probably do agree with Aristotle that exposure and abortion should be practiced in some cases (fr. 9, lines 145–9). However, the cases mentioned are different. Aristotle says that a deformed child should be exposed and that children beyond the number prescribed by the state should be aborted. The Pythagoreans do not directly mention either of these cases and instead call for abortions in the cases of incest and rape and perhaps other instances (see the commentary on lines 145–9). Again Aristotle says that abortion is only admissible up to the time when the fetus achieves sensation and life, whereas the Pythagoreans mention no such restrictions. Second, both accounts assert that it is not good for people who are too young to procreate. Aristotle and the *Precepts* also agree on the reason for this, i.e. that the bodies of the young are not yet fully developed. However, the

Precepts and Aristotle come to different conclusions as to the proper age for marriage. The *Precepts* simply recommend that it not be before the age of twenty, while Aristotle recommends that women do marry before age twenty, at the age of eighteen, while men should not marry until thirty-seven. Moreover, Aristotle also goes on to specify that those who are too old should not procreate either (see also *Generation of Animals* 766b29–30), while the *Precepts* make no comment about this. In general, the *Precepts* have a deep distrust of sexuality that is missing from Aristotle. The *Precepts* urge that the young not even know about sexuality until they are twenty, and that after that age sex ought to be infrequent. Aristotle, while recommending that men beyond the age of fifty be released from procreating for the state, concedes that they may continue to engage in sex for health.

Thus consideration of what Plato has to say on procreation in the *Laws* and what Aristotle has to say in the *Politics* leads to the same conclusion that was developed in [Chapter 9](#) of the Introduction: it is not the case that the similarities between the *Precepts* and Plato and Aristotle in their accounts of the generation of children are so striking that we must suppose that Aristoxenus wrote the *Precepts* with key passages of Plato and Aristotle in mind.

Pythagorean Views on Sex and Procreation Outside of the *Precepts*

Pythagoreanism is not monolithic, so that the *Precepts* do not represent the only Pythagorean comments on sex and procreation. The oral maxims known as *acusmata* (or *symbola*) which were collected already by Anaximander of Miletus and Aristotle in the fourth century represent an earlier account of the Pythagorean way of life than the *Precepts*, and it is legitimate to ask what relation there is between this earlier tradition and the *Precepts* on issues relating to procreation. Only three of the *acusmata* preserve relevant material. The most important has been mentioned above: “One must produce children in order to leave another to serve the gods in place of oneself” (Iambl. VP 86). Such a command would be consistent with the respect for the gods characteristic of the *Precepts* (frs. 1 and 8) and is not inconsistent with what is said about procreation, but there is no direct or even implied assertion of this point in the surviving fragments of the

Precepts, which are, generally speaking, more interested in restricting procreation than justifying it.

The other two relevant *acusmata* are connected to one another. The first says that “one should not procreate with a woman who wears gold jewelry” (Iambl. *Protrepticus* 21 no. 35) and the second that “one must not drive out one’s own wife for she is a suppliant” (Iambl. *VP* 84). Thus, a Pythagorean should not have children with a concubine (a woman who wears gold jewelry) and he should show the same respect for his wedded wife as for a suppliant, who is protected by the gods (Gemelli Marciano 2014: 145–6). Other passages in the biographical tradition report that Pythagoras urged all the men of Croton to give up their concubines and only have sex with their wives. They are not to neglect their wives and thus cause them to have adulterous liaisons and produce bastard children (Iambl. *VP* 48, 132 and 195). Unfortunately we cannot be confident that either of these passages represent early tradition and they could have been created out of the last two *acusmata* listed above. Hieronymus of Rhodes, writing in the fourth century, supports this general presentation of Pythagoras, when he reports that in his journey to the underworld he saw those who were not willing to have sex with their wives being punished (Diog. Laert. 8.21 = fr. 42 White). These passages are in turn related to the statement that a woman may enter a temple on the same day on which she has sex with her husband but never if she has sex with anyone other than her husband, which is ascribed variously to Pythagoras himself (Iambl. *VP* 55), his wife Theano (Diog. Laert. 8.43) and to Deino the wife of Brontinus (Iambl. *VP* 132). Again, however, it is unclear whether this statement derives from early evidence or is a creation of the later tradition.

The *Precepts* have no explicit statement that men should only have sex with their wives and avoid concubines. However, in fragment 9, lines 147–9, the *Precepts* assert that only children which are generated as the result of temperate and lawful procreation should be raised. In itself this would not rule out sex with a concubine or require that sex only occur in married couples. However, the *Precepts* also assert that one should only engage in sex infrequently. This might then imply that the little sex that does occur should be among married couples, but this would only be so if the *Precepts* did require procreation. Otherwise, so far as what is explicitly said goes, one could have infrequent sex with concubines and not raise the children. However, the *Precepts* also assert

that there should be as many hindrances to sexual activity as possible, and praise the traditional rules against incest and having sex in a temple or in public for this reason. It is tempting to believe, then, that they would also think that another salutary limitation of sex would be to limit it only to one's wedded spouse, but this remains uncertain (see further below).

The Pythagorean assertion that one may enter the temple on the same day if one has had sex with one's spouse, and never if one has had sex with anyone else, is a clear attempt to revise traditional Greek attitudes toward sex, whereby sex polluted the individual for a period of time so that sex was not allowed in temples or in some cases for a certain period before entering them (Burkert 1972: 177). The Pythagoreans here seem to have the enlightened view that it is not sex that pollutes, but rather whether one has sex with the appropriate person or not. On the other hand, the idea that adultery can never be forgiven is more severe than religious laws, which allow purification for adultery after a period of time (Gemelli Marciano 2014: 146). The *Precepts* explicitly endorse the traditional Greek ban on sex in a temple but the reason given for this, that there should be as many hindrances to sex as possible, does not suggest that they regarded sex as polluting. So the *Precepts* are once again consistent with the view that sex with one's spouse is not polluting but there is no explicit statement to this effect. Again the distrust of sex evident in the *Precepts* seems to militate against any positive assertions about it, even if they do not embrace the idea that it is ritually polluting.

There are three different references to sex in the historian Diodorus of Siculus' account of Pythagoreanism in the first century BC. First, Pythagoras is said to have advised that it was advantageous not to approach a woman in the summer, and in the winter only sparingly (10.9.3). This has no direct parallel in the *Precepts*, but the reason that is then cited for this advice shows a marked connection to the *Precepts* both in form and content: "For in general they supposed that all types of sexual activity were harmful and thought that the continual practice of them was thoroughly productive of weakness and destruction." First, the style is very reminiscent of the *Precepts*, which regularly use both "in general" (καθόλου) and "believed" (ὑπελάμβανεν) and "thought" (ἐνόμιζε – see the Introduction on style). The manuscript for this fragment of Diodorus has the plural for the first verb and the singular for the second and editors have usually preferred the singular for both

with Pythagoras as the subject. But the plural is preferable as the *lectio difficilior* (see [Appendix 3](#)) and constitutes another strong indication that the sentence derives from the *Precepts*, which universally use the plural. Second, the content that emphasizes that every sort of sex is harmful matches exactly the attitude towards sex that is manifested in the *Precepts*. It thus seems quite possible, although not certain, that the sentence starting with “in general” in Diodorus ultimately derived from the *Precepts* (see subsidiary precept 4 in [Appendix 3](#)). It is not certain that the same is true of the first comment on the appropriate season of the year for sex. This was a common topic in discussions of procreation (Aristotle, *Politics* 7.16, 1335a35) and, since the reason for the assertion appears to go back to the *Precepts*, it might seem obvious that the assertion does too. However, the only thing connecting the statement of the reason to the assertion about the season is the Greek word γάρ (“for”), which could easily have been inserted to replace another particle such as μέν or δέ, especially since the *Precepts* very frequently use the phrase καθόλου μέν (δέ) in order to make a general assertion. Moreover, Diogenes Laertius (8.9) has a simpler version of the advice about the seasons found in Diodorus: “Have sex in the winter and not the summer.” Diogenes’ report continues, moreover, in a different way than Diodorus: “Sex is less damaging in fall and spring but harmful in every season and not good for health.” It thus looks as if the advice on the proper season for sex took several forms. Diogenes’ version is more coherent as a whole, since it keeps the focus on the seasons throughout. This increases the likelihood that Diodorus’ version adds the passage from the *Precepts* to serve as a justification for an assertion about the proper season for sex that was not found in the *Precepts*, but, of course, certainty is not possible.

Diogenes presents the report about the season for sex as part of the contents of three books that were famously ascribed to Pythagoras and that Diogenes considered genuine, but which are regarded as spurious by modern scholars (Diog. Laert. 8.6; Centrone [2014](#): 317). These are the three treatises *On Education*, *On Statesmanship* and *On Nature*. Diogenes says that these treatises also contained the following story: “when Pythagoras was asked by someone when one should engage in sex, he said, whenever you do not wish to be master of yourself” (8.9). The same story is reported by Diodorus (10.9.4). The distrust of sex here is typical of the *Precepts* but there is no parallel in the *Precepts* for the idea that sex does away with self-mastery. More importantly, the format of

a prominent figure being asked a question (“when Pythagoras was asked”), while very common in the biographical and anecdotal tradition, appears nowhere in the *Precepts*. Thus it is very unlikely that this anecdote derives from the *Precepts*.

Stobaeus (3.17.12) reports that Pythagoras advised “not often a human from a human” which we are told was a riddling way of saying that one should not engage in sex continuously. The word “continuously” is shared with the report from Diodorus (10.9.3) that is likely to go back to the *Precepts* (“the continuous practice of sex was altogether productive of weakness and destruction”), but none of the other language is similar so that this is probably a coincidence. Again the aversion to sex expressed here is in accord with the *Precepts* but the format of the story, with its riddle, does not at all fit the *Precepts*. Porphyry, probably relying on the novel of Antonius Diogenes (written some time in the first–third centuries AD), says that Pythagoras identified two sorts of pleasures. One sort comprises the pleasures of the belly and of sex, and these he likened to the man-destroying song of the Sirens, while he likened the other sort, which comprises pleasures in things noble and righteous and necessary for life, to the harmony of the Muses (VP 39; Macris 2014: 387). Again the suspicion of sexuality accords with the *Precepts* but neither the content nor the style finds a close parallel in the *Precepts*.

The manuscripts of Athenaeus (2 69e) report that Ibycus the Pythagorean said that a certain sort of lettuce was called eunuch-lettuce, because it diminished sexual desire. There is no Ibycus elsewhere in the Pythagorean tradition but a Lycon is mentioned several times, so most scholars would emend Ibycus to Lycus, which might be an alternate name for the Lycon mentioned elsewhere in the Pythagorean tradition. Iamblichus refers to a Lycon of Tarentum (VP 267) and Diogenes Laertius refers to a Pythagorean named Lycon (5.69). Athenaeus himself (10 418e) refers to a Lycon of Iasus who wrote a book *On the Pythagorean Lifestyle* praising Pythagoras’ moderate diet. This is likely to be the same Lycon, “who called himself a Pythagorean” according to Aristocles, and criticized Aristotle’s extravagant way of life (Eusebius, PE 15.2.8). It is not clear whether the Lycus or Lycon who reported on the eunuch-lettuce is the same as the Lycon who criticized Aristotle (Burkert 1972: 204). Given the general hostility to sex in the Pythagorean tradition it is not surprising that they should have found, or thought they had found, foods that curbed sexual appetite. The *Precepts* give general

comments on the importance of diet, but there is no parallel for a recommendation of a specific food such as this, so it is not likely that eunuch-lettuce was mentioned in the *Precepts*.

The *Golden Verses*, which became a popular compendium of supposed Pythagorean wisdom in the first centuries AD (Thom 1995; Flinterman 2014: 342), only has one brief allusion to sex: “be master . . . of your stomach, sleep, lust and anger”(lines 9–10). A more interesting treatment of sex is found in the pseudo-Pythagorean writing ascribed to Charondas, *The Preface to the Laws* (Thesleff 1965: 62.30). Pseudo-Charondas follows the rest of the tradition described above in urging men to love their lawful wife and to beget children from her. However, he then focuses on human seed saying that “the man should not send forth the seed of his children into anything other than his wife. The man should not spend lawlessly and treat arrogantly [his seed], which is honored by nature and law. For nature made seed for the begetting of children and not for licentiousness.” There is no parallel for this emphasis on seed in the *Precepts* or elsewhere in the Pythagorean tradition. Turning to women, pseudo-Charondas follows the rest of the tradition in saying that it is necessary that they be temperate and not engage in impious associations with other men but uniquely adds that they will face retribution from the *daimones*, if they do.

Apart from the one passage in Diodorus, then, there is no indication of the influence of the *Precepts* on the rest of the Pythagorean tradition regarding sex. The *Precepts* do agree in general tone with the rest of the Pythagorean tradition and its distrust of sexuality but there are no explicit parallels for a number of parts of that tradition and it is indeed likely that different Pythagoreans at different times expressed the basic Pythagorean hostility to sex in different ways. It is noticeable that in the case of sexuality and procreation, while there is no conflict with what is said in the *acusmata*, there is also no obvious connection between the *Precepts* and the *acusmata*.

Are the Pythagoreans of the *Pythagorean Precepts* Procreationists?

The most stimulating recent treatment of Pythagorean attitudes to sex is to be found in Kathy L. Gaca’s book, *The Making of Fornication* (2003). Gaca argues that the Pythagoreans are procreationists in that they “support the principle that a temperate and deliberately reproductive

goal within marriage is the sole justifiable and permissible goal of either sexual intercourse, or – more extremely – of sexual activity of any sort, especially if it involves ejaculation” (2003: 115). There is, however, no explicit statement of procreationism in the *Precepts*. Indeed, one of the problematic features of Gaca’s approach is that, while she initially treats some Pythagoreans separately (e.g., Charondas and Ocellus), she has a tendency to want to construct one Pythagorean view out of very disparate texts (e.g., the account of the nuptial number in Plato’s *Republic*, Plato’s account of the structure and incarnation of the soul in the *Timaeus*, the fragments of Philolaus, “Pythagoras” speeches in Croton as reported by Iamblichus, the *Pythagorean Precepts*, Charondas and Ocellus). It is true that some of Aristoxenus’ associates, whose views he is likely to be presenting in the *Precepts*, are said to be pupils of Philolaus (Diog. Laert. 8.46), so we might suspect that they agreed with some of his views. However, it is perilous in the extreme to assume that the *Precepts* agreed with principles in Plato’s works, which may well be Platonic rather than Pythagorean, let alone with principles stated in later pseudo-Pythagorean works. There need to be very clear indications in the text of the *Precepts* themselves that these views found in later texts were also assumed by the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts*. To a great degree the same principle applies to Philolaus. We have some evidence for Philolaus’ psychology but we have no evidence for what principles he thought should govern the Pythagorean life in general or sexuality in particular. It is not legitimate to assume that his psychology is the psychology with which the *Precepts* are working, unless there is some pretty clear evidence in the text of the *Precepts* themselves that this is the case.

Gaca argues that procreationism develops in Pythagoreanism from “uniquely Pythagorean concerns” (2003: 115) and she lists two such concerns, one of which cannot, in fact, be found at all in the *Precepts* and the other of which is not found in the form described by Gaca. The first concern is “to limit the degree of discordance that immortal souls suffer during embodiment.” This concern is perhaps found in Plato, but it is not found in the *Precepts*, since nowhere in the discussion of procreation in the *Precepts* is the concept of embodiment mentioned. The second concern is “to remedy the individual and social corruption that Pythagoreans attribute to heedless acts of discordant reproduction,” since “such practices are . . . destructive to the harmonic intervals of the

souls undergoing embodiment.” It is undeniably true that the *Precepts* are concerned about the corruption that comes from discordant reproduction, but they say nothing whatsoever about any harmonic intervals of the soul. Plato and perhaps Philolaus think of the soul as constructed according to harmonic intervals, but there is no mention of number or harmonic ratios in the section on reproduction or indeed elsewhere in the *Precepts*. Gaca goes on to say that this procreationism is supported by three persuasive strategies. The first is that persons must diet and exercise to prevent the sexual appetite from being overfed. It is true that the *Precepts* suggest that a proper and not excessive diet is important for those procreating but they say nothing about diet feeding the sexual impulse. The second strategy is to point out that unrestrained reproduction is “fit only for brute animals.” This strategy is to a degree found in the *Precepts*, since they describe procreation without plan as brutish (fr. 9, line 175), and this is clearly intended to shame people and keep them from reproducing in this way. However, the primary use of the comparison with animals in the *Precepts* focuses on human beings paying more attention to the procreation of the animals they raise (e.g., dogs and birds) than to human procreation. The third strategy mentioned by Gaca is to revere semen and regard its misdirection as a destruction of a life. The *Precepts* are concerned that the seed produced should come from a fully developed adult body and that it is produced from a body that is in good shape, but they say nothing about revering semen or misdirecting it. These ideas found in the pseudo-Pythagorean treatise by Charondas are not paralleled in the *Precepts*. Thus the uniquely Pythagorean concerns and strategies that Gaca associates with procreationism are for the most part not present in the *Precepts*.

Nonetheless, if we strip off these peculiar concerns and strategies as arising from Plato and pseudo-Pythagorean texts, it is still reasonable to ask if the *Precepts* do not adopt a basically procreationist stance. Looking just at fragment 4 we can conclude that we should not engage in procreation when we are too young or when we are drunk or stuffed with food. This is just advice on the proper procedures to follow when trying to produce children and says nothing about sex being limited to procreation. However, the fragment says that the young should ideally not even know about sex until they are twenty years old and even when they reach twenty, they should only engage in sex rarely. The reason given for this is that infrequent sex will contribute to the good condition

both of those procreating and also of the children that will be produced. So sex should be infrequent and the focus is clearly on the quality of seed and hence of offspring produced. We might think that this would limit sex to sex within marriage for the purpose of procreation, but nothing like this is ever explicitly asserted. In fragment 9 again, a great deal of the focus is on procreating under the right conditions (e.g., lines 149–58, 160–76), but this does not in itself rule out the possibility that one can on occasion engage in sex without having procreation as a goal. The key addition in fragment 9 that is not found in fragment 4 is lines 140–5. Here Aristoxenus reports that the Pythagoreans approved of the traditional prohibitions against incest, sex in temples and sex in public, not because there is anything particularly horrific about these acts but because there should be as many hindrances as possible to sexual activity. Certainly one obvious way to hinder sexual activity is to limit it to marriage and so it may well be that the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* thought that it should be. This idea gains support from the assertion elsewhere in the *Precepts* that one should never do anything with pleasure as the goal (fr. 9, lines 64–5). If one could assume that the *Precepts* took the same stance as the first part of Ocellus' treatment of procreation, i.e. that sex is either for pleasure or reproduction, it would obviously be the case that the *Precepts*, having ruled out sex for pleasure, would be bound to say that all sex should be for reproduction. Once again, however, there is no statement of this dichotomy in the *Precepts* and for all we know they may have thought that sex could have health as its aim, as Aristotle suggests, or friendship, as the Stoics will later suggest. The problem is simply that there is no explicit assertion that sex ought to be limited to conscious procreation.

Lines 145–9 go on to argue that any children that are conceived through incest or with violence should be aborted or exposed. In addition even children who are conceived without incest and with temperance should not be raised unless they were generated for the purpose of lawful production of children. Thus only children that are conceived within marriage and that are not excessive in number should be raised. Again, however, the *Precepts* focus on the nature of the resulting children and aim at ensuring that only children conceived in the best of circumstances are raised, and fall short of asserting that only sex aimed at procreation is permissible. Arguments from silence are notoriously weak and this is especially true when a work only survives in fragments,

as the *Precepts* do, so it is reasonable to suggest the circumstantial evidence is strong that the *Precepts* did advocate procreationism, even if it did lack a number of the features identified by Gaca as uniquely Pythagorean. There remains the possibility, however, that the Pythagoreans thought that we should be very careful to procreate only in the best of conditions, that only children conceived in the best of circumstances should be raised, that sex should be only practiced infrequently and that sex like any other activity should not be done solely for pleasure, while still not being strict procreationists. They might admit that on rare occasions it is possible to engage in sex without aiming to produce children.

Detailed Commentary

Line 1 – περὶ δέ: Aristoxenus frequently uses this phrase plus the genitive to introduce a new section of the *Precepts*. It appears here and in lines 71 and 124 below as well as in other fragments of the *Precepts*. See the discussion of the style of the *Precepts* in the Introduction.

Line 1 – περὶ δὲ δόξης: Δόξα can mean two things. On the one hand, it can refer to someone's "opinion," "belief" or "judgment" about a matter. On the other hand it can refer to the opinion others have of one, i.e. one's "repute" and usually "good repute" or "glory." Initially it is not clear which of these senses is in play here or whether both are involved. However, by lines 9–11 it becomes clear that the δόξα in question is the δόξα that is involved in teaching and learning (μανθάνειν ... μανθάνοντι ... διδάξαι). Thus the section is not concerned with glory. Its goal is not to tell us whether we should or should not seek fame and reputation and from whom we should seek to earn such repute. The issue is rather to which opinions or beliefs we should pay attention, if we want to become educated and live a good life. The section focuses not on what others think of us but rather which views of others about the nature of reality and the proper way to live one's life should be accepted. Thus, Dillon and Hershbell (1991) are mistaken in translating δόξα as "good opinion." Clark (1989) rightly uses the translation "belief" and Brisson and Segonds (1996) "opinion." Edelstein notes that Diels-Kranz identify the meaning of δόξα here as "opinion" in their index but objects that δόξα παρὰ τῶν πολλῶν in line 3 "clearly is 'fame'" (1967: 52, n. 174). However, the meaning of δόξα παρὰ τῶν πολλῶν can just as easily be "the opinion of the many." Whether it means "fame" or "opinion" is determined by the context and that context, as argued above, supports the meaning "opinion"

as Diels-Kranz saw. The *Precepts* are not here giving advice on how to gain the good opinion of others but rather on which opinions of others are good.

Line 1 – *περὶ δὲ δόξης τάδε φασι λέγειν αὐτούς*: It seems most likely that Aristoxenus wrote *περὶ δὲ δόξης τάδε ἔλεγον* and that Iamblichus awkwardly added *φασι* and *αὐτούς* (“they say that they” or “it is reported that they”) to indicate that he was presenting information from the tradition. The *φασι* indicates that Iamblichus is turning to a different source than he was using for the preceding section.

Line 1 – *ἀνόητον μὲν εἶναι*: This phrase, meaning “it is foolish,” is found in a number of other fourth-century authors: Isocrates *Panath.* 90.5, *De Bigis* 24.1; Plato *Gorg.* 541e8.

Lines 1–2 – *ἀνόητον μὲν εἶναι καὶ τὸ πάσῃ καὶ παντὸς δόξῃ προσέχειν*: Cobet (1878) suggested that the first *καὶ* be deleted here. It is certainly true that it is not connected to the following *καὶ*, as is shown by its position before the article. With this position it is not possible to translate the sentence “it is not reasonable to heed both every opinion and the opinion of every person.” Nonetheless, it appears that the first *καὶ* does have a legitimate function and should be kept. It is to be taken closely with *μὲν* and thus correlates with the *καὶ* that appears in line 6 in the *δέ* clause (*ἀνόητον δ’ εἶναι καὶ*). The *καὶ . . . καὶ* is thus a typical “both . . . and” construction that reinforces the *μὲν . . . δέ* construction. A full literal English translation would thus be “It is on the one hand both not reasonable to heed . . . and on the other hand also not reasonable to despise.” This is too heavy-handed in English and most translators are right to omit the “both” and take the “also” by itself as the translation for the *καὶ . . . καὶ* construction (Dillon and Hershbell 1991; Clark 1989).

Line 3 – *ὑπολαμβάνειν τε καὶ δοξάζειν . . . line 7 ὑπολήψεώς τε καὶ δόξης*: In the first sentence of this section only *δόξα* is used, but throughout the rest of the section the two nouns *ὑπόληψις* and *δόξα* or their cognate verbs *ὑπολαμβάνειν* and *δοξάζειν* always appear as a pair. No attempt is made to distinguish the two so that it appears that they are being treated as synonyms. This indicates even more clearly that *δόξα* is used in its meaning “opinion,” since *ὑπόληψις* has the very similar meaning “supposition,” but only rarely means “glory” and such a use first appears in the second century AD (LSJ s.v.). The pairing of the two words is not particularly common, but Demosthenes provides a good parallel where the two words are used interchangeably: “If such had not been the view (*ὑπολήψεως*) you take of us, he would not have been at pains to convert you. I shall prove without difficulty that he has no right to ask you to reverse that opinion (*δόξαν*)” (*De Corona* 229.1; tr.

Vince). Here the *ὑπόληψις* in the first sentence is clearly the *δόξα* alluded to in the second.

Plato never uses the word *ὑπόληψις*, but Aristotle makes a distinction between *δόξα* and *ὑπόληψις*, which he treats as the most general term to refer to cognitive states. Irwin (1985: 427) translates *ὑπόληψις* as “supposition” and makes the point well when he says that for Aristotle “supposition is the generic term for cognitive states, including both knowledge and belief. It does not always indicate something tentative or conjectural.” Although in some passages Aristotle presents *ὑπόληψις* and *δόξα* as a pair, careful study shows that he does distinguish between them and that *δόξα* is, in fact, along with *ἐπιστήμη* and other cognitive states, a species of *ὑπόληψις*. Thus at *de An.* 427b25 he says “*ὑπόληψις* itself has various forms – knowledge, opinion (*δόξα*), practical wisdom and their opposites.” When he pairs *ὑπόληψις* and *δόξα* at *EN* 1139b17 as both admitting falsehood in contrast to knowledge, his point is not that any “supposition” can in itself be true or false, as any “opinion” can, but rather that as the generic term for cognitive states *ὑπόληψις* will include some states that are true and some that are false. So *ὑπόληψις* and *δόξα* are not being treated as if they are synonymous by Aristotle in this passage (Greenwood 1909: 140–1). Just as there was no evidence for a distinction between *δόξα* and *ἐπιστήμη* in the *Precepts*, so there is none developed between *ὑπόληψις* and *δόξα*. The *Precepts* use the terms *ὑπόληψις* and *δόξα* in a loose, non-philosophical sense, such as is found in the passage from Demosthenes quoted above. These terms refer to what people think or suppose quite generally.

Lines 4–6 – δῆλον . . . δύνάμεις: These lines may be amplification by Iamblichus or his source of the basic idea stated in line 3 that “to form opinions and suppositions well belongs to few people.” Aristoxenus uses *δῆλον*, which appears twice in these lines, frequently in the *Elementa Harmonica* but it does not appear elsewhere in the fragments of the *Precepts* except at line 167 of fragment 9, where again it might be part of an expansion by Iamblichus.

Line 8 – ἀνεπανόρθωτον: There are only eighteen uses of this adjective in all of Greek literature according to the most recent edition of the *TLG*. The earliest use outside Iamblichus is in Philo in the first century AD. It occurs here in a sentence that is likely to be Iamblichus’ own, since the verb has a finite form, whereas the surrounding passage has the infinitives in indirect statement that are typical of the *Pythagorean Precepts*. The adjective appears in two other passages in Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, both of which quote the same passage of Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts* (fr. 11 = Iambl. VP 102 = Iambl. VP 232). There too the adjective is likely to be an addition by Iamblichus.

Line 12 – καθόλου δ': This expression appears eight times in fragment 9 and is one of the characteristics of the style of the *Precepts*. See the discussion of the style of the *Precepts* in the Introduction and the commentary on fragment 2, line 1.

Lines 12–13 – τοὺς σωθησομένους: For the use of σώζω and σωτήριος in the *Pythagorean Precepts* see the commentary on fragment 2, line 2. Since the young are to attend not just to their elders but also to those who have lived well in order to be saved, it must be their ability to live a good life that is at stake and that is saved and not simply their existence.

Line 15 – ἡλικίας: The basic meaning of this word is “time of life” or “age.” Thus in the *Iliad* (22.419) Priam can wonder whether Achilles will respect his (old) age when he comes to ransom the body of Hector, while in Herodotus someone can be described as young “in age” (3.134). It can also come to refer to the prime of life (i.e. manhood or womanhood), and is used in expressions indicating that someone has come of age (Pl. *Euthyd.* 306d). Here in Aristoxenus its use in the plural refers to the different ages that can be distinguished in life, or in the colorful Pythagorean expression, to the ages into which a life can be “carved up.” For an account of the system of ages in this fragment see the account of the argument of section 2 above. For the overall account of the ages of human life in the *Precepts*, see the commentary on fragment 2.

Line 15 – ἐνδεασμένους: This verb, ἐνδαίω, appears only twice, here and in Hesychius' lexicon where its aorist middle imperative, ἐνδασαι, is glossed with μέρισον, the aorist imperative of μερίζω, which means “divide” or “distribute.” The simple form of the verb, δαίω, which means “divide,” is also fairly rare and is not used in the active. It is used in the passive to describe the Ethiopians whom Poseidon visits at the beginning of Homer's *Odyssey* (1.23) as a people “who have been divided in two” (τοὶ διχθὰ δεδαίεσται). The middle of the verb means distribute and is especially used of dividing or “carving” the meat at a feast in Homer (*Od.* 15.140; 17.332). The compound verb ἐνδαίω should have essentially the same meaning as the simple verb except that the preposition indicates that the division has been within something, and accordingly the compound verb can be translated “divide up.” Brisson and Segonds (1996) translate *tranches*, “slices,” evidently trying to allude to the verb's use in Homer for slicing meat. They may be right that the verb has some distinctive overtone given that it is highlighted as an unusual word by Aristoxenus (see the next note). It could be that Aristoxenus is just calling attention to the fact that the word is rarely used, even if it has a fairly mundane meaning, such as “divided up.” His emphasis on the word as the Pythagoreans' particular expression would, however, make even more sense if the word did have an unusual connotation. Accordingly, I will follow Brisson and Segonds' (1996) lead and

translate it as “carved up,” although it is far from certain that this is the exact connotation that the word had for the Pythagoreans.

Line 16 – οὕτω γὰρ καὶ λέγειν αὐτοὺς φασιν: I assume that Aristoxenus wrote something like οὕτω γὰρ καὶ ἔλεγον and that Iamblichus added αὐτοὺς φασιν and changed the dependent verb to an infinitive, as he does in a number of cases in the course of fragment 9. Aristoxenus typically introduced sections of the *Precepts* with a verb like ἔλεγον (e.g., fr. 3 ἔλεγον, cf. ἔφασκον in fr. 6), but in this case οὕτω γὰρ καὶ ἔλεγον does not come at the beginning of the sentence, where we would expect it to be if it introduced a new section. Instead it is inserted immediately after ἐνδεδασμένους to call attention to the unusual Pythagorean terminology (see the note above). Οὕτω and καὶ particularly call attention to the odd usage, “they did *indeed* speak *thus*.” In other cases Iamblichus’ addition of αὐτοὺς φασιν seems likely to suggest that a new excerpt from the *Precepts* is being introduced, but in this case, his remark, like the remark of Aristoxenus he is introducing, just calls attention to the unusual terminology. It appears that the initial quotation from the *Precepts* in fragment 9 does not break here but continues from line 1 all the way to line 46.

Line 16 – τοῦ τυχόντος: ὁ τύχων means literally “the person who happens to be present” or “any chance person,” and is often translated as “the ordinary person.” Phrases like this are used four times in fragments of Aristoxenus in Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, always in a genitive of characteristic in the negative: “it is not of a chance intellect to judge” (182), “it is not of the chance person to connect the ages of life” (here in 201), “there is need of no chance judgment” (204), “desire is in need of no chance training” (205). The expression is also used twice in Aristoxenus’ *Elementa Harmonica* so we might think that it was a favorite of his. However, it does appear in four other places in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* that are not likely to be derived from Aristoxenus (44, 140, 192, 255). Thus, there is a suspicion that this is a characteristic phrase of Aristoxenus’ in the *Precepts* and that its use in the four passages above belongs to him and not Iamblichus, but certainty is not possible. Certainly the emphasis on more than ordinary effort or ability is in accord with the strong aristocratic flavor of the *Precepts* as seen in its condemnation of the practices of the multitude (e.g., fr. 5, line 5; fr. 9, line 24 and lines 175–6).

Line 17 – συνείραι: The basic verb εἶρω has as its primary meaning “fasten together in rows” or “string” and is applied to a necklace strung with beads of amber in Homer (*Od.* 18. 296). Συνείρω is used to mean “string together” by Aristophanes in the *Birds*, when an outraged leader of the chorus of birds describes a certain Philocrates as stringing together (συνείρων) finches and selling them at the price of an obol for seven (1079). The verb is very frequently

applied to what is strung together in thought or speech. In some cases it picks out instances where people merely string together words without any true understanding (Arist. *EN* 1147a21). It also, however, clearly refers to cases where there is a strong logical coherence to what is said or thought, as when, in Plato's *Statesman*, the Eleatic stranger, at the end of a passage that develops a definition of the statesman, urges that they go back to the beginning and link together (ξυνείρωμεν) the account they have given step by step (*Pl. Plt.* 267a). Here in the *Precepts* the verb clearly has this positive connotation of "link coherently." The point is that not just anyone can "link together" or "connect" coherently the different ages into which our life is carved up. It is noteworthy that Aristotle uses just this verb in discussing the Pythagorean cosmological system in the *Metaphysics* (986a3–12). Aristotle says that the Pythagoreans collected and correlated as many similarities as they could between numbers, on the one hand, and the characteristics and parts of the heavens, on the other. He adds that, if these analogues failed at any point, the Pythagoreans eagerly filled the deficiency in order to make their system συνειρομένην, i.e. something that is "coherently connected," a connected whole. As an example Aristotle says that, when there appeared to be only nine heavenly bodies, whereas a coherent whole would contain ten bodies, since ten is the perfect number, the Pythagoreans added as a tenth body, the counter-earth. This is a clear reference to the cosmological scheme that Philolaus put forth in the second half of the fifth century (Huffman 1993: 231–61). It thus appears that the Pythagoreans who set out the precepts recorded by Aristoxenus wanted human life to have the same sort of coherence as Philolaus' cosmos. It is indeed a cornerstone of the Pythagorean way of life as set out in the *Precepts* that it have a coherent structure.

Line 17 – ἐκκρούεσθαι γὰρ αὐτὰς ὑπ' ἀλλήλων: The simple verb κρούω means to strike or knock as in striking the hands together in clapping or in knocking on a door (LSJ). The literal sense of the compound ἐκκρούω is thus to strike or knock out and can be seen in Xenophon where a hunter is warned to be on his guard lest a boar knock the spear out of his hand with a flick of its head (*Cyn.* 10.12). It is also used by Xenophon of a military force, which drives out or expels another force from an acropolis (*HG* 7.4.16.3). The verb is also frequently used metaphorically as it is here in the *Precepts*. Aristotle particularly uses it where two things are in competition of some sort and one overrides, expels, or overpowers the other. Thus, he raises the question of whether we can perceive two things at the same time, if the stronger stimulus always overrides (ἐκκρούει) the weaker (*Sens.* 447a15). At *EN* 1175b8 he says that the pleasure from one activity (listening to the flute) can impede another activity (philosophical discussion) and says that the pleasanter activity drives (ἐκκρούει) out the other, the more so the more pleasant it is, until the other activity completely

ceases. At *EN* 1119b10 he says that intense pleasures even overpower (ἐκκρούουσιν) reason. It can also be used of putting off a legal decision to another day (*Dem.* 19.144) or pushing aside questions that are raised in a discussion (*Pl. Prt.* 336c).

Here in the *Precepts* the previous sentence and the succeeding sentences focus on the difficulty of connecting the different ages of human life to one another so that succeeding ages take over what is good from those that precede and so that neighboring ages do not negatively influence one another. Thus, the assertion that the ages ἐκκρούεσθαι . . . ὑπ’ ἀλλήλων, if a person is not trained properly from birth, seems to mean that the ages “are impeded by one another,” so that the one overrides, overpowers or expels the proper force of the other.

Line 18 – ἄγη: The verb in this context means “conduct,” in the sense of “train” or “bring up.” Xenophon (*Mem.* 4.1.3) uses it of dogs that are trained (ἀχθείσας) well and Plato (*Leg.* 782d) of human beings that are rightly brought up (ἀγομένοις ὀρθῶς).

Line 19 – ἀγωγῆς: Plato defines education as a drawing and guiding (ὁλκή τε καὶ ἀγωγή) of children (*Leg.* 659d). In this sense of guidance ἀγωγή is also used as a synonym for education. Thus, Aristotle (*EN* 1179b31) talks of the difficulty of obtaining a proper education (ἀγωγῆς ὀρθῆς) in virtue from youth up. It was of course later especially used to describe the Spartan education system (*Polyb.* 1.32.1). Here in fragment 9 it appears to mean education or training. It also appears in fragment 8 (=VP 175), where it has the slightly different meaning of “conduct of life.” See the commentary *ad loc.*

Lines 19–20 – καλῆς τε καὶ σώφρονος γινομένης καὶ ἀνδρικήs: The only parallel for this collocation of adjectives is found in Plato’s *Laws*. Plato says that there are two subdivisions of the noble kind of dancing: one has to do with war and involves noble (καλῶν) bodies and a manly (ἀνδρικήs) soul engaged in violent effort, the other is that of the moderate (σώφρονος) soul engaged in good deeds and moderate pleasures (814e). Staab goes far beyond what it is reasonable to conclude from the similarity of these passages, when he says that the basic thought of the passage in the *Precepts* goes back to Plato (2002: 400–1) and suggests that Iamblichus had started from the passage in Plato and remodeled it for his own uses (2002: 400, n. 986). The adjectives are common and it is totally unwarranted to assume that Plato’s use of them in a quite different context, to describe bodies and souls engaged in dance, must lie behind Aristoxenus’ use of them to describe the education of children and young men. All the parallel with Plato shows is that both Plato and the Pythagoreans valued temperance, nobility and manliness, which is hardly a surprise.

Lines 28–9 – νεανίσκους δὲ γενομένους ἀφεῖσθαι παρά γε δὴ τοῖς πολλοῖς ποιεῖν ὃ τι ἂν βούλωνται: The complaint voiced here, that it is ridiculous to train children to be well-ordered and temperate and then allow them to do whatever they want when they become young men, as the many do, is found in a number of fourth-century texts and was clearly a common conservative complaint (for the general train of thought, see Cohen 1991: 231–6). Thus, Isocrates, contrasting the democracy of his forefathers with contemporary democracy, asserts that the Athenians of the good old days did not have many supervisors when they were children (ἐν μὲν ταῖς παιδείαις πολλοὺς τοὺς ἐπιστατοῦντας εἶχον) only to be allowed to do what they wanted when they became adults, but rather received greater supervision when they reached their prime than when they were children (ἐν αὐταῖς ταῖς ἀκμαῖς πλέονας ἐπιμελείας ἐτύγχανον ἢ παιδὺς ὄντες – *Areop.* 37). Similarly, Aristotle asserts that it is not sufficient that when people are young they receive nurture and proper supervision (νέους ὄντας τροφῆς καὶ ἐπιμελείας τυχεῖν ὁρθῆς); when they become men they must practice these lessons and become habituated to them (ἀνδρωθέντας δεῖ ἐπιτηδεύειν αὐτὰ καὶ ἐθίζεσθαι – *EN* 1180a1–3). Again, in *the Constitution of the Lacedaemonians* (3.1), Xenophon reports that when boys become lads (εἰς τὸ μειρακιουῖσθαι ἐκβαίνωσι), others (οἱ ἄλλοι) stop providing them with tutors and teachers and allow them to govern themselves (αὐτονόμους ἀφίσιν). Lycurgus, on the other hand, noticed that this age was characterized by hubris and very strong desires for pleasure (ισχυροτάτας δὲ ἐπιθυμίας τῶν ἡδονῶν). Accordingly he imposed toil on people of this age and contrived it so that they had no free time.

Täger (1922: 60–1) argued that Aristoxenus took over the whole train of thought as well as individual words from Xenophon and goes on to suggest that Aristotle, in the passage from the *Nicomachean Ethics* quoted above, was also dependent on Xenophon. But the fact that a similar train of thought appears in four different authors in the fourth century (Täger overlooks the passage in Isocrates) need not suggest that any of them is directly dependent on any other. Since they are all four talking about the same general topic, there is inevitably some overlap in language, but there are no striking linguistic parallels to suggest that one of the four was composed with the text of one of the others directly in mind. Täger notes that the *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians* and the *Precepts* both use the verb ἀφήμι (“let alone”). But this is a common verb and hardly constitutes a striking parallel. He also notes a parallel between the *Precepts* and a different work of Xenophon, the *Education of Cyrus*. The *Precepts* talk of allowing the young “to do whatever they want” (ποιεῖν ὃ τι ἂν βούλωνται), while, in the *Education of Cyrus*, Xenophon (1.2.2.6) describes most states as allowing people to educate their children “as anyone wishes” (ὅπως τις ἐθέλει) and allowing older people “to live as they wish” (ὅπως ἐθέλουσιν διάγειν). However, the issue of whether people should be allowed “to do whatever they want” is

a central issue in the critique of democracy in the fourth century and such language appears in a wide range of authors in the fourth and fifth centuries (see the note on lines 42–3). Both of these texts are simply reflecting this widespread usage. Finally, it is true that both Xenophon in the *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians* (3.1) and Aristoxenus in the *Precepts* refer to the hubris of young men and mention their susceptibility to strong desires, but both of these characteristics are widely attributed to adolescents then and now. There is no reason to suppose that Aristoxenus or the Pythagoreans could only have come up with the idea that the young were susceptible to strong desires and should not be allowed to do whatever they want on the basis of reading Xenophon or Isocrates or Aristotle. All four texts are expressing a common fourth-century conservative view in their own way.

The weakness of Täger's case can be seen when he goes on to make the further point that Aristotle too was dependent on these passages in Xenophon, when, in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1180a23), he comments that Sparta appears to be almost the only state in which the lawgiver has paid attention to the rearing and pursuits of the citizens, whereas in other states no attention is made to such things and each one lives as he wishes like the Cyclopes. Certainly Aristotle could have known of the passages of Xenophon quoted above, but again there are no similarities in specific language and details, except that both refer to Sparta. Thus we can only assume that Aristotle was explicitly drawing on Xenophon by assuming that there were no other sources of information about Sparta available to Aristotle, but this is a false assumption since Aristotle cites a certain Thibron and alludes to a number of other authors as sources for Sparta (*Pol.* 1333b18–20).

Line 29 – σκεδόν: Its position shows that σκεδόν goes with εἰς ταύτην τὴν ἡλικίαν. The point is that, while persons of other ages might sometimes manifest faults that belong to two other ages (e.g., a grown man might betray faults of both a child and a young man), examples of this sort of behavior *generally speaking* belong to the age of young men, who often have the faults of both children and mature men. Aristoxenus is fond of using σκεδόν to soften assertions (LSJ s.v. iv 2). It appears twice more in fragment 9 and is used twenty-two times in the *Elementa harmonica*.

Line 32 – τάξεως: This is a very prominent concept in the *Precepts*. See the commentary on fr. 11, lines 34–5.

Line 34 – ὕβρεως τῆς παιδικῆς: The concept of ὕβρις is central to Pythagorean morality, since they regarded all human beings as by nature most prone to ὕβρις. For a discussion of the concept in Pythagoreanism see the commentary on fragment 8. It involves a claim to more precedence than is deserved and an enjoyment in taking away the precedence of others. The translation “insolence”

emphasizes both the unwarranted claim of status and the enjoyment in taking it away from others. Such an attitude is characteristic of the spoiled child. Plato agrees with its association with the child here in the *Precepts*, when he calls the child the most insolent (ὑβριστότατον) of creatures (*Leg.* 808d).

Line 36 – διαθήσειν: This word can refer either to a bodily state or condition (e.g., *Hp. VM* 7) or to a state or condition of the soul (*Pl. Phlb.* 11d). It is found frequently not just in Plato and Aristotle but also in the Hippocratic corpus. Aristotle defines it as “an ordering either according to place, power or form of that which has parts” (*Metaph.* 1022b1 – Διαθήσεις λέγεται τοῦ ἔχοντος μέρη τάξις ἢ κατὰ τόπον ἢ κατὰ δύναμιν ἢ κατ’ εἶδος). It often seems to refer to a relatively temporary condition rather than to a fixed nature. Thus, in *On Ancient Medicine* it is used to refer to the particular condition of the patient, which the physician must take into account when prescribing a diet, in contrast to the nature of the human being, which is consulted in defining what is generally a suitable diet for a human being (*VM* 7). Aristotle later explicitly contrasts a *ἥξις*, which he describes as longer lasting and more stable, with a *διάθεσις*, which is easy to move and change, giving as examples of the latter disease and health (*Cat.* 8b27–37). In this passage of Aristotle it seems best to translate the former word as “state” and the latter as “condition” (see Irwin 1985: 426–7).

In this passage of the *Precepts* *διάθεσις* refers to the condition of the soul of the child described in the preceding three lines, which appears to be longer lasting than the conditions Aristotle is thinking of, since the condition belongs not just to the specific moment but rather to the age of childhood as a whole. It is doubtful that Aristotle would regard conditions that last as long as an entire period of life as *διαθέσεις*, so it does not appear that the *Precepts* are working with Aristotle’s specific conception of a *διάθεσις*. In the very next lines of the *Precepts*, however, *διάθεσις* appears alongside *ὀρμαί*, “urges,” which suggests that it is being used not of a longer lasting condition but of a more transitory condition. This same use appears again twice later in the fragment, in lines 113–19. There it is used of the unique but relatively changeable condition of soul produced by each kind of food or drink. The one example given is the effect of wine, which is said to make people first more merry, and then more crazed and unseemly. These conditions are clearly of shorter duration than the condition of the child described in the present passage. In the *Precepts*, then, *διάθεσις* refers to a condition of the soul, which can be a condition that is changeable and of relatively short duration, such as the effect produced by wine, or a state, which is characteristic of a period of life, such as childhood. I will accordingly use the English translation “condition” throughout. The usage in the *Precepts* is thus closer to the usage of Plato (e.g., *Resp.* 489a; see Shorey 1935 *ad loc.*), where *ἥξις* and *διάθεσις* are not yet distinguished, as they are in Aristotle.

Line 37 – φιλοτιμιῶν: The Greeks, not unlike moderns, had an ambivalent attitude toward ambition and the pursuit of honor, φιλοτιμία. In some passages people who are φιλότιμοι are treated positively (Isoc. 9.3), but, here in the *Precepts*, the Pythagoreans, like Plato (Pl. *Phd.* 68c) and Aristotle (*EN* 1125b9), use the adjective negatively.

Line 41 – δεῖσθαι: See the comment on fragment 8, line 9.

Line 41 – ἐπιμελείας: This noun and the cognate verb appear a total of five times in fragment 9 and the verb also appears in fragment 2, where we are told that “attention must be paid (ἐπιμελητέον) to every age.” Thus, the concept of care or attention paid to a troublesome age or emotion is prominent in the *Precepts*, but the noun and cognate verb also appear frequently in passages of Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* that are not derived from the *Precepts*.

Line 42 – καθόλου δ’: See the commentary on fragment 2, line 1.

Lines 42–3: οὐδέποτε τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐατέον εἶναι ποιεῖν ὃ τι ἂν βούληται: The critics of radical democracy in Athens frequently criticized it for confusing happiness or liberty with being able “to do what one pleases” (Cohen 1991: 231–6). This can be seen, for example, in Isocrates, who says that radical democracy wrongly thinks that “the power to do whatever one wishes is happiness” (τὴν δ’ ἐξουσίαν ὃ τι βούλεται τις ποιεῖν εὐδαιμονίαν – *Panath.* 131. See also *Areo.* 20). Aristotle (*Pol.* 1310a32) says that liberty is wrongly defined as “to do whatever one wishes” (ὃ τι ἂν βούληται τις ποιεῖν). Similarly, in the *Cyropaedia* (1.2.2), Xenophon reports that most states permit everyone to educate their children as they wish (ὅπως τις ἐθέλει) and allow older people to live as they wish (ὅπως ἐθέλουσι διαγίγειν). There can be little doubt that this passage of the *Precepts*, which says that “no person should ever be allowed to do what he wishes,” is a product of a similar conservative mindset, although there is no explicit reference to democracy here. Certainly the use of this common “to do what one pleases” language in no way suggests that the *Precepts* are dependent on any of the other authors who use it.

The *Precepts* use the expression “to do whatever one wishes” in accordance with its ordinary use in Greek as “to do whatever one pleases” and show no awareness of the narrower sense of “doing what one really wishes” given to it by Plato, who was followed by Aristotle in some passages. In *Gorgias*, Plato distinguishes between someone who ποιεῖ ὃ δοκεῖ αὐτῷ and someone who ποιεῖ ὃ βούλεται (468d etc.). According to this distinction we often do what seems best to us or what we think we want (ὃ δοκεῖ), when we are not doing what we really want (ὃ βουλόμεθα), because what we are doing is not what is good for us and what we really want is what is good for us. Thus in the *Gorgias*, the tyrant is

someone who has the power to do whatever seems best to him but this does not give him the power to do what he really wants, i.e. what is good for him, because his power does not in itself give him the knowledge of what is good for himself. Similarly, in the *Republic*, Plato asserts that the tyrannical man “will least of all do what he wishes” (577e – ἥκιστα ποιήσει ἃ ἄν βούληθῃ). Aristotle accepts Plato’s understanding of wishing as can be seen, e.g., at *Rhetoric* 1369a2, where he defines wish as longing for the good (ἡ μὲν βούλησις ἀγαθοῦ ὀρεξίς), on the grounds that no one wishes for anything other than what he thinks is good (οὐδεὶς γὰρ βούλεται ἄλλ’ ἢ ὅταν οἴηθῃ εἶναι ἀγαθόν).

Plato’s interpretation of “to do what one wishes” is developed in the face of the ordinary use of the expression. Polus’ outraged reaction (467b) to that interpretation in the *Gorgias* shows how paradoxical it appeared. The Greek orators use the phrase “to do what one wishes,” in identical form to what appears here in the *Precepts*, quite frequently. It always has the meaning of “to do whatever one pleases” rather than the narrower Platonic sense of “to do what one really wants.” The orators often use the expression in contexts where they are trying to persuade the jury that, if they do not convict those accused, they will be giving them license “to do whatever they please” (ποιεῖν ὅ τι ἄν βούλωνται – e.g., *Lys.* 22.20; 30.35; *Dem.* 59.111). Even Plato uses the phrase in the ordinary way in certain contexts. At *Lysis* 207e, he clearly uses it to mean “to do whatever you please” when he teasingly suggests to Lysis that since his parents want him to be happy, they allow him to do what he pleases (ἔωσιν ἄρα σε ἃ βούλει ποιεῖν) and never scold or hinder him. *Lysis*, of course, objects that they hinder him in many ways.

The assertion here in the *Precepts* that a person should never be allowed to do what he wishes is clearly nonsensical on the Platonic interpretation, since it would then be saying that a person should never be allowed to do the good. It does not follow that the *Precepts* were composed before the Platonic distinction was made, although they could have been. It may simply be that the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* saw no reason to accept Plato’s narrower reading of the phrase and chose to use it in its ordinary meaning in order to make the point they intended. As we have seen, Plato himself uses the phrase with its ordinary meaning in some contexts.

It is not hard to see why the Pythagoreans understood the phrase in this way and why they would not have been willing to accept Plato’s interpretation, if they knew of it. The central assumption of the *Pythagorean Precepts* is that human beings are by nature hubristic (fr. 2). This premise is fundamentally at odds with the Socratic and Platonic principle that human beings desire what is good for them. Given that human desires are inevitably prone to excess, it follows easily that human beings should not be allowed to do what they wish.

Lines 43–4 – ἐπιστατεῖαν . . . καὶ ἀρχήν: The rare word ἐπιστατεῖα, used to express the concept of supervision, is likely to be a distinctive Pythagorean/Aristoxenian term. See the commentary on fragment 8, line 9. For the Pythagorean concept of ἀρχή see fragment 10.

Line 45 – τῶν πολιτῶν: References to the city-state and its citizens are relatively rare in the *Precepts* (fr. 2, line 9; fr. 10, lines 38 and 47, fr. 9, line 142). Although the *Precepts* emphasize human beings' need for rule and supervision, they differ from a text such as Plato's *Republic* in that their focus appears to be on the private life of the Pythagorean community and not on the city-state and its institutions *per se*. The *Precepts* inevitably comment on how the individual is to respond to the city-state, and general Pythagorean rules about proper supervision apply to the city-state, but there is no attempt to sketch an ideal state. It is important to note, however, that in another work, *The Laws of Education*, Aristoxenus reported that Xenophilus, who is likely to be his major source in writing the *Pythagorean Precepts*, "when asked how he would best educate his son, said, if he were born in a city-state that is well ordered" (πόλεως εὐνομούμενης – Diog. Laert. 8.15–16 = Aristoxenus, fr. 43 Wehrli). This might suggest that Xenophilus had something to say about how the city-state should be governed, but it need not. He may simply be agreeing with two points found in the *Precepts*, that human beings need supervision (fr. 2) and should abide by the laws of their fathers (fr. 8).

Lines 45–6 – ταχέως γὰρ ἐξίστασθαι τὸ ζῶον ἑαθὲν τε καὶ ὀλιγωρηθὲν εἰς κακίαν τε καὶ φαυλότητα: Täger (1922: 60) cites a passage in Plato's *Laws* as a parallel for this idea. In that passage Plato asserts that "A human being, as we say, is tame (ἡμερον) . . . but if not nurtured sufficiently or well becomes the most savage (ἀγριώτατον) of all the creatures the earth produces" (766a). Both the *Precepts* and this passage of the *Laws* share the general idea that human beings turn out badly if their upbringing is neglected, but this is a widespread idea at all times and nothing in the language used in the two passages suggests that either is dependent on the other. In fact, quite the reverse is true. The two passages reveal a crucial difference between Plato and the Pythagoreans concerning human nature. Plato's belief that the human being is tame (ἡμερον) is quite contrary to the Pythagorean assumption that human beings are by nature hubristic (fr. 2). Both believe that human beings are ruined by bad upbringing, but, in the case of the Pythagoreans, the bad upbringing allows a basically vicious nature to express itself, while, in the case of Plato, it corrupts a basically tame nature.

Line 45 – ἐξίστασθαι: ἐξίστημι is used intransitively in the middle and literally means "to stand aside from." It is often used with the genitive to mean "cease from," "depart from," or "abandon." Sometimes the preposition εἰς is used with

the accusative to show for what one has abandoned something. Thus in Plato's *Laws* (907d5) the impious are warned to abandon their own ways for pious ways (ἐξίστασθαι . . . τρόπων τῶν αὐτῶν εἰς τοὺς εὐσεβεῖς). Aristotle uses the verb without a genitive to mean “to degenerate” (i.e. “to abandon its own nature”) and adds εἰς plus the accusative to show what something has degenerated into (*Pol.* 1306b18; *GA* 768a2 ἐξίσταται πᾶν οὐκ εἰς τὸ τυχὸν ἀλλ’ εἰς τὸ ἀντικείμενον – “Everything degenerates not into some chance thing but into its opposite”). This last usage provides the best parallel for this passage of the *Precepts*, where the correct translation of ἐξίστασθαι τὸ ζῶον . . . εἰς κακίαν . . . is thus “the creature degenerates into vice.”

Line 45 – τὸ ζῶον: This word is clearly used to link human beings to animals as prone to degeneration without supervision. See the note on fragment 8, line 12.

Lines 46–7 – ἔρωτᾶν τε καὶ διαπορεῖν πολλάκις αὐτοὺς ἔφασαν: The last two words belong to Iamblichus and are his introduction to this section of material drawn from the *Precepts*. As suggested in my overview to sections 200–13 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, these introductory words in most cases are likely to introduce a new section that Iamblichus is quoting, so that there is a break with the preceding material, although the general subject matter is the same. That there is a break here is supported by the fact that comparison with fragment 2 of the *Precepts*, drawn from Stobaeus, shows that the material quoted by Iamblichus here in lines 48–51 is based closely on lines 16–18 of fragment 2. But Iamblichus here preserves nothing of the material in lines 1–15 that leads up to lines 16–18 in fragment 2, so he is clearly taking just this three-line section from fragment 2 and inserting it into his discussion of temperance and marks this fact by using his typical introductory words “they said that they” (αὐτοὺς ἔφασαν). Since the φασιν in line 16 appears to serve a different purpose (see the commentary *ad loc.*), it may be that everything from line 1 up to line 46 is a continuous quotation from the *Precepts*, although both Iamblichus and his source will have made their typical additions and revisions.

Line 47 – διαπορεῖν: This verb can be equivalent to ἀπορέω and hence simply mean “to be at a loss” (e.g., *Pl. Leg.* 777c6). The Pythagoreans do not really seem to be at a loss in this case, however, but rather to be raising a difficulty about our typical procedure in rearing children. Aristotle uses διαπορέω much more frequently than anyone before him and often of someone raising a philosophical problem or puzzle. Thus, in the *Metaphysics* as part of his critique of Plato's theory of forms, Aristotle says, “Most of all someone might raise as a puzzle what in the world forms contribute to sensible things” (991a8–10). Here the puzzle is largely rhetorical and is, in fact, a way of raising an objection to the theory of forms. This seems to be the usage here in the *Precepts*: “They often asked and

raised a difficulty as to why we accustom. . .” The verbs that introduce the actual *Precepts*, such as διαπορεῖν here, are undoubtedly Aristoxenus’ own words, so it is not surprising that he uses διαπορεῖν in a way that is similar to his teacher Aristotle’s usage, although the verb is not found elsewhere in the *Precepts* or the other works of Aristoxenus. We might suppose that the verb is introduced by Iamblichus as an expansion on the single verb ἐρωτᾶν, but the verb is not common in Iamblichus either. It appears in only five other places in all of his writings and only one other place in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*.

Lines 48–51: These lines are derived from fragment 2, lines 16–18. See the commentary there.

Lines 51–2 – ὁ καὶ ἔστιν ὁ τε οἰνόφλυξ καὶ ἄπληστος ἐν μεγάλῳ ὄνειδει κείμενος: Nauck wanted to expunge this sentence as an absurd insertion. Deubner keeps it (1935: 658) following DK, which notes that ὁ before καὶ is equivalent to διό (DK 1.474.26). For this usage of the relative pronoun see LSJ s.v. Ab IV 2. We might also have expected τε to follow οἰνόφλυξ, but Deubner cites other examples of freedom in the placement of τε in Iamblichus (1935: 649). As mentioned in the overview of this section, such examples are not common in the excerpts from the *Precepts* in Stobaeus so the sentence may be an addition by Iamblichus.

Line 52 – οἰνόφλυξ: This word appears already in the fifth century in the Hippocratic corpus (*Prorrh.* 2.2). It is common in the Aristotelian *Problems*, where a series of questions are raised about drunkards, such as “Why do drunkards tremble?” (871a27).

Line 52 – ἄπληστος: In itself this adjective just refers to someone as insatiable or greedy without specifying the nature of their greed. Here, where the context is that of food and drink and drunkenness has just been mentioned, it is reasonable to interpret it as referring to someone who is “insatiable for food,” i.e. a glutton (cf. Arist. *HA* 591b2).

Lines 59–60 – καθόλου δέ: See the commentary on fragment 2, line 1.

Line 60 – [τοὺς Πυθαγορείους ἔφασαν] παρακελεύεσθαι: As in the previous uses discussed above (e.g., line 47) ἔφασαν is Iamblichus’ word and is his way of indicating that he is presenting something preserved in the tradition about the Pythagoreans, in this case a passage from Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts*. As argued in the overview to this section of fragment 9, it may also indicate that he is switching to a new excerpt from the *Precepts* that is not continuous with what precedes it. None of the excerpts from *Precepts* in Stobaeus refer to the Pythagoreans by name so that τοὺς Πυθαγορείους is also

likely to be Iamblichus' addition. The excerpts from the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus show that Aristoxenus usually began precepts with a verb in the imperfect so that in Aristoxenus' text, this section probably began καθόλου δὲ παρεκελεύοντο. Iamblichus changed the imperfect to a present infinitive in indirect discourse after ἔφασαν. There is, however, no other example in Aristoxenus of the use of παρακελεύομαι to introduce a precept. The verb is used by Iamblichus in VP 230 to introduce a precept but the parallel passage at VP 101 suggests that the original text for this precept in Aristoxenus (fr. 11) had παρήγγελον rather than παρεκελεύοντο. It is possible then that here too παρακελεύεσθαι was introduced by Iamblichus, but there seems little reason for him to have done so and the word is perfectly possible for Aristoxenus, so it is better to assume that Aristoxenus did, in fact, write παρεκελεύοντο here.

Lines 60–1 – [τοῖς ἐντυγχάνουσί τε καὶ ἀφικνουμένοις εἰς συνήθειαν]: In the excerpts from the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus there is never any explicit indication of the audience for the precepts. It thus seems likely that Aristoxenus tacitly assumed that his readers would understand that the *Precepts* were intended for other members of the Pythagorean society or those who wanted to follow its guidance. It is therefore very likely that this specification of the audience as “those who met with them and became their associates,” is Iamblichus' addition. Such explanatory expansions are characteristic of his way of presenting the *Precepts* (see the comparison between Stobaeus and Iamblichus in the Introduction).

Lines 61–2 – εὐλαβεῖσθαι τὴν ἡδονήν: For the view of pleasure in the *Precepts* see the overview to lines 59–69 and also the commentary on fragment 3, especially the commentary on lines 4–5. Aristotle, while giving advice on how best to attain the mean in action (EN 1109b7–8), says, “in everything we must especially be on our guard against the pleasant and pleasure” (ἐν παντί δὲ μάλιστα φυλακτέον τὸ ἡδὺ καὶ τὴν ἡδονήν). The general sentiment is quite similar to what we find in the *Precepts* but there is not likely to be any direct relationship between the two passages, both because the language used is not the same, apart from the word for pleasure, and also because the basic idea is developed in different ways. Aristotle emphasizes that we are not impartial when we make judgments about pleasure and says that we should regard it in the same way as the Trojan elders regarded Helen in Book 3 of the *Iliad*. The *Precepts* neither use the judging metaphor nor make reference to the *Iliad*.

Line 62 – [εἴπερ τι καὶ ἄλλο τῶν εὐλαβείας δεομένων]: Aristoxenus' style, as revealed by the excerpts in Stobaeus, tends to be direct and avoid elaboration, so it seems quite likely these words are an expansion by Iamblichus. Literally they

mean “if indeed [they beware of] anything else of those things which require caution.”

Line 63 – ἐμβάλλειν εἰς ἁμαρτίαν: There is no exact parallel for this expression in the fourth century but it is clearly similar to such expressions as εἰς . . . αἰσχύνην καὶ ἀδικίαν . . . ἐμβεβληκότα (Din. 3.7).

Line 64 – καθόλου δέ: See the commentary on fragment 2, line 1.

Line 64 – [ὥς ἔοικε, διετρίβοντο]: In the excerpts from the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus the precepts are stated boldly and there is no parallel for a qualifying phrase such as ὥς ἔοικε, “as it seems.” Nor do the excerpts in Stobaeus describe the way the Pythagoreans actually acted but rather always present their advice on how to act. Thus, it seems very likely that ὥς ἔοικε, διετρίβοντο is an insertion by Iamblichus. There are also no instances of διατρίβω in sections of the *Precepts* that we can confidently regard as by Aristoxenus, whereas it does appear in what appear to be insertions (fr. 9, line 6) or transitional sentences by Iamblichus (VP 102). If these words are removed, the infinitives πράττειν (2) and δεῖσθαι can be understood as still depending on the verb that introduced this section of the *Precepts*, παρεκελεύοντο, in line 60.

Lines 64–6 – μηδέποτε μηδὲν πράττειν ἡδονῆς στοχαζομένους καὶ γὰρ ἀσχήμονα καὶ βλαβερὸν . . . τοῦτον εἶναι τὸν σκοπόν: LSJ defines σκοπός as “the mark . . . on which one fixes the eye” or an “aim, end, or object,” while the verb στοχαζομαι means “to aim at” such a mark or object, with the object being put in the genitive case. There are a great variety of possible objects at which human action can aim. Thus a doctor, for example, must aim at measure (μέτρου) in the amount of food given to patients (VM 9) and both a general and a doctor can be described as aiming at safety (σωτηρίας – Pl. *Leg.* 962a). The idea that pleasure is an aim of human action is surely common at all periods. In the fourth century both Plato and Aristotle use language that is similar to what is found here in the *Precepts*. Thus, in the *Philebus* (60a7), the eponymous character’s position is said to be that “pleasure is the right aim for all animals and all should aim at this” (τὴν ἡδονὴν σκοπὸν ὁρθὸν πᾶσι ζώοις γεγενῆσθαι καὶ δεῖν πάντας τούτου στοχαζέσθαι). Similarly in the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle describes a confectioner who “while aiming at pleasure (ἡδονῆς στοχαζόμενος) might produce something healthy” (1027a3).

The Pythagoreans appear to have been fond of using the image of aiming at a mark (στοχαζέσθαι) to describe the effort to live a good life. Here in fragment 9 the focus is on picking the right mark at which to aim. In fragment 7 the Pythagoreans recognize that even if the right mark is chosen, some individuals are better able to actually hit that mark than others. They identify one sort of luck

as an inborn luck according to which some people are naturally good at hitting the mark (εὐστοχοί), whereas others miss the mark because their thought is never borne towards the target (εὐστόχως φερομένης) but is always confused.

Lines 65–6 – ἀσχήμονα καὶ βλαβερὸν: This pair of adjectives is quite uncommon, but it also appears in Aristotle at *EN* 1123a33, where he describes certain vices as not bringing reproach, because they are not harmful (βλαβεραί) to those around one nor excessively unseemly (ἀσχήμονες). See also Aristotle *EN* 1126b33. In fragment 3, ἀσχημοσύνη is said to be one of the three most well-known kinds of mistaken desire. Desires of this kind are described as ἀσχήμων but also as φορτικός and ἀνελεύθερος. Since these latter two adjectives are clearly being introduced as close synonyms for ἀσχήμων, they can help us understand what the Pythagoreans meant by the latter. Something that is φορτικός and ἀνελεύθερος is vulgar and servile, something that would be done only by the uneducated and uncultured masses who are not properly free individuals (see the commentary on fr. 3, line 9). It would appear then that what is ἀσχήμων, is what is unseemly in the sense of what is not informed by the rules of the more cultured and educated parts of society. What is ἀσχήμων is the behavior that would be expected from unrestrained human nature with its basically hubristic nature (fr. 8).

Line 66 – ὥς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ: The use of this expression to indicate generalizations that are valid but that admit of exceptions, and thus that are true “for the most part,” is well known in Aristotle, but von Staden (1999) has demonstrated that it was also common before Aristotle in the Hippocratic corpus.

Line 67 – τὸ καλὸν τε καὶ εὐσχημον: Literally what is εὐσχήμων is what has good form or shape (σχήμα) and hence what is elegant or graceful. It is in this sense that the cognate noun is applied to the god Eros by Agathon in Plato’s *Symposium* (196a) when he talks of the shapely grace (εὐσχημοσύνη) of his form (ιδέας). It is more commonly applied, however, to something that fits with the proper form of behavior expected by society. Thus, with an aristocratic tone to our voice we might in English talk of what is “proper form.” In Euripides’ *Hippolytus*, after Phaedra has said that, in resisting her love for her step-son Hippolytus, her central concern is to have a heart that is just and good and to preserve her good name, the nurse responds that what Phaedra needs in the situation are not words that observe the proper form of morality (λόγων εὐσχημόνων), i.e. she does not need “seemly” words, but the man she desires (490). Again, in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1128a7), Aristotle characterizes the person who does not observe the mean in creating laughter, the buffoon, as someone who is more concerned to raise a laugh than to speak things that observe the proper societal forms (λέγειν εὐσχήμονα), i.e. to say what is “seemly.”

In fifth- and fourth-century Greece, as in the present world, many will have regarded what is “seemly” as overly fussy restrictions imposed by society, as the remarks of the nurse in *Hippolytus* show. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that many paid great reverence to what was seemly, as the remark of Aristotle quoted above shows. In light of their heavy emphasis on the need for rules in human life (cf. frs. 2 and 8), it is certainly no surprise that the Pythagoreans should identify adherence to the forms prescribed by society, “the seemly,” as the primary goal of proper human action.

The same pairing of καλόν and εὔσχημον appears in fragment 5 of the *Precepts*, where reference is made to sciences and practices that are καλὰς καὶ εὐσχημονας. The pairing is also found in other fourth-century writers. Aristotle for example says that the good man will bear all sorts of misfortune in a seemly way (εὐσχημόνως) and will always act in the noblest manner (κάλλιστα) that the circumstances allow (*EN* 1101a2; cf. *Pl. Resp.* 401c5; *Xen. Cyr.* 1.3.8.8).

Lines 68–9 – τὸ συμφέρον τε καὶ ὠφέλιμον: These words are close synonyms, as can be seen from Aristotle’s (*EN* 1156a21–7) discussion of friendships for utility (τὸ χρησιμὸν), which are described as arising either among the elderly, since in old age men do not pursue what is pleasant but what is beneficial (ὠφέλιμον), or among those in their prime or the young who pursue what is advantageous (τὸ συμφέρον). The two words also appear together in a number of other passages in the fourth century, e.g., *Pl. Resp.* 336d, where “the advantageous” and “the beneficial” are among the answers that Thrasymachus says he will not accept to the question, “What is the just?”

τὸ συμφέρον appears only here in the *Precepts*, but the Pythagoreans use the related adjective σύμφορος in three other passages, so that it is clearly an important term of commendation. In two of the three passages it is paired with καλός (fr. 2, line 17 and fr. 9, lines 143–4) in a way that suggests that the two adjectives are used to pick out the two most important sorts of goods for the Pythagoreans, the fine and the advantageous, as they are here in fragment 9, lines 68–9. The other most common word for this type of good in the *Precepts*, “the useful” (χρήσιμον – see the passage from Aristotle mentioned above) appears in fragment 8 (= *Iambl. VP* 174) and earlier in fragment 9 (line 53) as well as in fragment 5. ὠφέλιμον also appears in fragment 11, line 16 where admonitions to the young are described as “beneficial,” if they are done correctly.

Aristotle (*EN* 1104b30–31) is thinking along the same lines as the *Precepts* when he identifies three objects of choice (the noble, the advantageous and the pleasant – καλοῦ συμφέροντος ἡδέος) and three corresponding objects of avoidance (the base, the harmful and the painful). It would appear that someone in the later Pythagorean tradition further developed the *Precepts*’ view, which identifies just two objects of choice, under the influence of this Aristotelian view.

In Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras* (39) we are told that Pythagoras thought there were three things that should be pursued or undertaken, and they are the same as those mentioned by Aristotle: the noble, the advantageous and the pleasant (καλῶν, συμφερόντων, ἡδέων). This same passage of Porphyry develops a theory of pleasure that also goes beyond what is found in the *Precepts* (see the overview of lines 59–69 above).

Line 69 – δεισθαι: See the comment on fragment 8, line 9.

Line 69 – κρίσεως οὐ τῆς τυχεύσεως: See the note on line 16 above.

Lines 71–9: For commentary on the parts of this section that are paralleled in Stobaeus, see the commentary on fragment 3. I will only comment here on material unique to Iamblichus' presentation. In the text I have marked the words that correspond to fragment 3 in bold and left the other words, which are likely to be additions by Iamblichus or his source, in ordinary type but in brackets. For the general relationship between fragment 3 and this section of Iamblichus, see the overview of lines 71–122 above.

Line 71 – περὶ δέ: See the note on line 1.

Line 71 – τῆς σωματικῆς ὀνομαζομένης: As the comparison with the parallel text in Stobaeus (fr. 3) shows, these words are an addition by Iamblichus. Since Aristotle appears to have been the first to use the adjective σωματικός we would not have expected it to be used by the Pythagoreans in the early fourth century. The *Precepts* do not appear to have differentiated bodily desires from any other sort of desire. It is true that they refer to a desire for food as arising, when *the body* has been emptied (line 82), and all the examples discussed are related to the body, but there is no hint of any other sort of desire; desire in general seems just to be equated with bodily desires. Iamblichus may well be emphasizing bodily desire under the influence of Plato. In both the *Phaedo* (65d–67b, 82b–84b) and the *Gorgias* (492e–494b) Plato contrasts the body and the soul and emphasizes the dangers specifically of bodily desires; Iamblichus quotes just these passages in his *Protrepticus* (64.7–8 τὸ σῶμα καὶ αἱ τοῦτου ἐπιθυμίαι, 67.21–2 τῶν κατὰ τὸ σῶμα ἐπιθυμιῶν, cf. 68.28, 84.13, 84.18).

Lines 71–2 – τοιαῦτα λέγειν ἔφασαν τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐκείνους: In his typical fashion in sections 200–13, Iamblichus replaces the simple τάδε ἔλεγον, which the parallel passage in Stobaeus (fr. 3) shows to have been what Aristoxenus wrote, with a more complex double indirect statement. "Ἐφασαν, "they said" or "it was reported," is simply Iamblichus' indication that he is giving a report from the tradition. He then supplies a specific subject, "those men" to replace the indefinite "they" in ἔλεγον.

Line 75 – διαθέσεως αἰσθητικῆς: The Pythagoreans use διόθεσις later in this section (lines 113 and 119) and elsewhere in fragment 9 (lines 36 and 38) and the adjective αἰσθητικός is attested in the fourth century (Pl. *Ti.* 67a), so that it would have been possible for them to use each of these words. The earliest parallel for their combination, however, is Galen (14.670.13 Kühn 1821–33). In light of this and, most of all, because these words are not found in the parallel passage in Stobaeus, they are likely to be an insertion by Iamblichus. Iamblichus also uses διαθέσεως in an inserted sentence at the end of fragment 11. On the Pythagorean use of διόθεσις, see the commentary on line 36 above.

Line 79 – κατεσκευασμένος: Iamblichus here replaces the rare adjective παρασκευαστός, which fragment 3 shows was the original reading. In doing so he slightly changes the meaning. See the commentary on fragment 3, lines 2–3. Iamblichus also replaces a form of παρασκευάζω, which is used in fragment 1, line 3 of the *Precepts* (from Stobaeus) with a form of κατασκευάζω in *VP* 175 (= fr. 8, lines 21–2).

Line 80 – διὸ δὴ καί: This combination (“wherefore indeed”) appears only here and in line 119 below in all of Iamblichus, so that it is unlikely to be his language and instead belongs to Aristoxenus or the Pythagoreans. It admittedly only appears in these two places in Aristoxenus, but it is fairly common in prose of the late fifth and the first half of the fourth century, appearing twice in Isocrates (e.g., 4.53), some fifteen times in Plato (e.g., *Resp.* 409a7), three times in the Hippocratic corpus, once in Demosthenes and four times in Aristotle.

Line 80 – πλείστης ἐπιμελείας: The same phrase is used above in line 41. See the note there for ἐπιμελείας.

Line 81 – δεῖσθαι: A usage that is characteristic of the *Precepts*. See the comment on fragment 8, line 9.

Line 81 – φυλακῆς: This noun appears only here in the *Precepts*, but the idea that one must be on one’s guard against certain desires appears again in fragment 4 (cf. line 98 below), where the cognate verb is used, when the Pythagoreans say that it is necessary “to be on one’s guard” (φυλάττεσθαι) against anything precocious. In fragment 8, line 19 the gods are described as closely guarding or watching (παραφυλάττοντος) human conduct.

Line 81 – σωμασκίας: This is a relatively rare word in all periods of Greek literature with around thirty total occurrences. Its earliest uses belong to the first half of the fourth century, when it appears four times, once in Xenophon and three times in Plato, so that it was in use when the Pythagoreans whose thought is

the basis for the *Precepts* were active. It does not appear in Aristotle or any other fourth-century authors besides those mentioned. It appears in only one other passage in Iamblichus (VP 21, a section likely to be derived from Apollonius' *Life of Pythagoras*).

It is derived from σῶμα (body) so that it is not surprising that the four uses in Plato and Xenophon appear to refer to “training of the body.” It is paired with health, so that, as medicine is directed at health, σωμασκήα is directed at bringing the body into good physical condition (Pl. *Leg.* 674b; Xen. *Mem.* 3.9.11). Here in the *Precepts* the usage is metaphorical, since it refers not to the training of the body *per se* but to the training of desire, which has been defined as a movement of the soul.

Lines 81–2 – οὐ τῆς τυχεύουσης: See the note on line 16.

Line 82 – τροφῆς: For Pythagorean concerns about an orderly diet, see above line 48 and fragment 2, line 16.

Line 83 – φυσικόν: Fragment 3 of the *Precepts*, derived from Stobaeus 3.10.66, shows that the *Precepts* made a distinction between desires that are acquired and provided from without and desires that are born with us (συμφύτους). In the version of the *Precepts* that Iamblichus presents here, he has kept the reference to desires that are acquired (ἐπικτήτους) and provided from without, although he uses a slightly different adjective in the second case (κατεσκευασμένος rather than παρσκευαστός). He makes no mention of the inborn desires, however, so that rather than making a distinction between two sorts of desire, he simply says that many desires are acquired and produced by men themselves. In the passage that he then goes on to quote from the *Precepts*, however, a distinction between two sorts of desire is clearly assumed and one of them is called acquired (ἐπικτήτων) in line 87. The sort of desire that is contrasted with these acquired desires is here in line 83 called “natural,” or rather it is said to be natural (φυσικόν) to desire certain sorts of things. Thus, Iamblichus' abridged account of the *Precepts* is confusing here because there is never any clear statement of a distinction between desires that are born with us and desires that are acquired. The original text of the *Precepts* contained this clear distinction as set out in fragment 3. In the passage here quoted by Iamblichus, the *Precepts* do not repeat the adjective συμφύτους (“born with us”) but instead simply say that to desire such things is natural (φυσικόν) in contrast to other acquired desires. There seems little doubt that the desires that are born with us are for the same things that we are here said to desire naturally, e.g., the desire for food, when the body (i.e. the stomach) is empty.

Staab (2002: 404) states that Iamblichus' use of φυσικόν here is an example of his taking over an Epicurean term. This conclusion is not warranted. Epicurus

does establish a distinction between desires that are natural and desires that are empty and further divides the desires that are natural into those that are necessary and those that are not (*Ep. Men.* 127–32; *Sent. Vat.* 29). The only similarity with the *Precepts* is in calling one set of desires φυσικάι. There is no mention in the *Precepts* of the other crucial parts of the Epicurean account of desires: the empty (κενάι) desires and the necessary (ἀναγκαῖαι) desires. As fragment 3 shows, even in the case of natural desires, the initial statement of the distinction between types of desires in the *Precepts* differs from Epicurus in using σύμφυτος rather than φυσικός. Thus the case for seeing this passage as a borrowing from the Epicureans comes down to saying that the mere use of the adjective φυσικός in a discussion of desires presupposes Epicureanism, which is clearly false. Aristotle's main distinction is between common and peculiar desires (*EN* 1118b8–9), but he refers to the desire for such things as food as natural in several passages and uses precisely the adjective φυσικός (*EN* 1118b9; cf. 1118b15). Thus, the reference to a natural desire need not be thought first to have occurred to Epicurus. Nor need we suppose that the idea of a natural desire was not possible before Aristotle. The distinction between nature and convention was well developed already in the fifth century and it seems very reasonable to suppose that the Pythagoreans of the first part of the fourth century could have recognized a category of natural desires. It is clear, moreover, that the adjective φυσικός was already being used in the discussion of moral issues in the late fifth and fourth centuries, since Xenophon reports (*Mem.* 3.9.1.2) that Socrates was asked whether courage is taught or arises by nature (διδασκτὸν ἢ φυσικόν). Thus the use of φυσικόν in this section of the *Precepts* in no way indicates that the passage is dependent on the Epicureans or Aristotle, and is perfectly reasonable usage for Pythagoreans of the first half of the fourth century. On the other hand, it is true that the word used for natural desires in fragment 3 is σύμφυτος (“inborn”) so that it might be that Iamblichus has rewritten the text here replacing σύμφυτος with φυσικός. Indeed, it appears that the Pythagoreans may have used σύμφυτος in the first place in order to indicate that the desires that they were interested in were not just natural but inborn. Such desires would be contrasted with superfluous desires that develop after our birth but that are in a sense “natural” because they arise in accordance with the nature of desire, which is to advance without limit. Iamblichus in this case would be overlooking a distinction made by the Pythagoreans and replacing “inborn” with “natural.”

Lines 83–4 – τὸ πάλιν ἀναπληρωθέντος κενώσεως ἐπιθυμεῖν τῆς προσηκούσης: As noted in the introductory remarks to this section, the Pythagorean account of desires differs from other accounts of desire which mention emptying and filling, such as Plato's, by explicitly discussing a desire for emptying rather than just talking in terms of a desire for filling. The fact that

this desire for emptying is mentioned in lines 83–4 thus strongly suggests that they come from the *Precepts* and are not an addition by Iamblichus. But what exactly is meant by a desire for emptying? There does not seem to be anything that can be meant by this desire other than the desire to eliminate waste from the body by urination or defecation. These certainly are strong bodily urges, perhaps as strong as the desires to eat and drink. The statement that only “an appropriate emptying” is natural also requires explanation. It might well seem that all bodily elimination is natural. Desires for elimination or vomiting that arise from disease might be viewed as not appropriate but it also seems possible to regard them as in fact the body’s natural way of ridding itself of toxins. Perhaps inappropriate emptyings are those initiated by human beings in certain situations; causing oneself to vomit when not sick so that one can eat more or the use of purgatives when not medically called for could be regarded as arising from unnatural desires for emptyings that are not appropriate.

Line 85 – περιέρχου: This adjective appears nowhere else in Iamblichus, either in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* or any other of his works, except in the five cases here in lines 85–99. Its use thus seems overwhelmingly likely to be due to his source, in this case the *Precepts*, rather than to Iamblichus himself. Applied to a person it means “taking needless or excessive trouble over something” and thus is often used negatively to describe someone as “meddlesome” or “presumptuous.” In Xenophon (*Mem.* 1.3.1.9) Socrates is reported to have said that it was pious to follow the custom of the state and that those acting in any other way were “presumptuous” (περιέρχους). Interestingly, the cognate verb is used by Plato in the *Apology* (19b) to describe the common charge against Socrates as someone who is presumptuous in investigating things under the earth and in the heavens. Applied to things the adjective can mean “overwrought” or “elaborate.” It is used frequently in Aristotle with the meaning “superfluous,” notably in his assertions that nature does nothing “superfluous” (e.g., *GA* 739b20) or nothing “superfluous or in vain” (e.g., *GA* 744a36). It is important to note that Aristotle never uses it in the context of desires as it is used here in the *Precepts*; he never uses it to describe an object of desire as “superfluous.” So it is implausible to suppose that its appearance in the *Precepts* is due to Aristoxenus’ training in the Lyceum. The adjective is by no means limited to philosophical authors and is used fairly frequently by the orators of the first half of the fourth century. Isocrates uses it eight times, sometimes of matters the discussion of which is superfluous (12.33.5), but also of a fop as being characterized by excess (τὸ περιέρχον – 1.27.4). Thus, the Pythagoreans seem to have taken over the adjective from public discourse in order to describe certain sorts of desire, and Aristoxenus’ emphatic use of the term in this passage of the *Precepts* is most likely to reflect a distinctive Pythagorean usage.

Line 86 – τρυφερός: This adjective, meaning “luxurious,” appears already in Thucydides (1.6.3.2), who describes the Athenians as among the first to set aside their weapons and change to a more luxurious way of life (τὸ τρυφερώτερον μετέσθησαν). The adjective appears only here in the *Precepts* and only here in Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. Timaeus of Tauromenium (350–after 260 BC), as represented in Justin’s Epitome of Pompeius Trogus (20.4), presents Pythagoras as leading Croton back to a frugal life after it fell into luxury following the victory over Sybaris in 510. It is not clear if this theme of Pythagoras fighting against luxury goes back to the early tradition, but it appears again in the later tradition. In section 171 of Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, luxury (τρυφή) is said to be the first of evils that enters a house followed by insolence (ὑβρις) and ruin (ἄλσος). This same sequence of evils is found in the pseudo-Pythagorean literature in Kallikratidas (*On Happiness in the Home* 104.27–105.4 Thesleff 1965). Luxury appears again in section 58 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, in a passage that probably goes back to Nicomachus, who is in turn probably relying on Heraclides. This is the famous passage that identifies three main types of human life by comparing life to a festival. One group of people in life is said to long for luxury (τρυφή) and money. Finally in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* 223, in a section where Iamblichus appears to be giving a summary of views he has reported, he says that the Pythagoreans tried to prevent and drive away luxury.

In light of the thematic importance of luxury in Timaeus and the later tradition, what is noticeable about this section of the *Pythagorean Precepts* is that the concept of luxury is not given more prominence. The noun τρυφή never appears and the adjective is used just the once here in a not very prominent way to describe luxurious clothing and bedding. It is true that the adjective ὑβριστικός is used once in the immediately following passage (line 99), but there is no triad of τρυφή, ὑβρις, and ἄλσος. It is possible, of course, that some other part of the *Precepts* highlighted τρυφή in a negative way, but the context here in the discussion of desires in fragment 9 is just where one would expect such a point to be made. Thus, while the *Precepts* are certainly consistent with what is said about luxury in the later tradition, the thematic importance of luxury in Pythagoreanism seems to arise later in the tradition than the *Precepts*. See also the comment on πολυτελοῦς in line 87 below.

Line 86 – ἐσθῆτος: The Pythagoreans were hardly alone in the Greek world in recognizing that desire for luxurious clothing could become excessive. There is evidence from a number of Greek city-states, including Athens, for public officials, one of whose responsibilities was to enforce restrictions on clothing, and particularly women’s clothing, at religious festivals including funerals. These officials were known as the “controllers of women” (*gynaikonomoi*) and could

exact significant punishments such as fines and exclusion from sacrifices (Ogden 2002). The *Precepts*, in accordance with their nature as moral rules for individuals rather than laws for city-states, make no mention of any officials or punishments. The *Precepts* simply make the point that desire for superfluous and luxurious clothing is acquired rather than natural. There is no explicit statement that such clothing should be avoided, but the implication is clearly that all superfluous desires are to be avoided.

Line 86 – στρωμνῆς: This word can refer either to the bed or the bedding. Since it is paired with clothing here, it seems more likely that it refers to bedding. In Xenophon’s report of Prodicus’ story of the choice of Heracles, virtue refers to the soft bedding (στρωμνὰς μαλακάς) of the man devoted to luxury (*Mem.* 2.1.30).

Line 87 – πολυτελοῦς: In one of the earliest uses of this adjective, meaning “costly” or “extravagant,” Herodotus (4.79) applies it to a house (οἰκίης μεγάλης καὶ πολυτελέος), just as here in the *Precepts*. The adjective appears three other times in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, all in passages that Iamblichus is likely to have derived from Apollonius’ *Life of Pythagoras*, and is used to describe burials, clothing and food.

The cognate noun πολυτέλεια played an important role in the later tradition. It appears in the spurious letter of Lysis to Hipparchus (Iambl. *VP* 75) but also in a supposed pronouncement of Pythagoras that is said to summarize his doctrines. According to this pronouncement a series of things must be banished by any means possible. The first things to be banished are disease from the body and ignorance from the soul but the third in the sequence is “extravagance” (πολυτέλεια) from the belly. This pronouncement is reported by Iamblichus in section 34 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* and by Porphyry in section 22 of his *Life of Pythagoras* and both may have derived it from Nicomachus’ *Life of Pythagoras*. Wehrli included this section of Porphyry’s *Life of Pythagoras* as part of fragment 17 of Aristoxenus, since Aristoxenus is mentioned by name shortly before. The pronouncement is very unlikely to derive from Aristoxenus, however, since the quotation from Aristoxenus appears to be limited to the sentence in which his name appears. Certainly, the following sentence, in which the pronouncement about extravagance appears, is not tightly connected to the sentence just quoted from Aristoxenus, which looks very much like a single sentence, which was perhaps originally a marginal comment that was inserted into the middle of a continuous account.

The noun πολυτέλεια also appears in another passage in Porphyry’s *Life of Pythagoras* (39), a passage that this time derives from the late source Antonius Diogenes (c. AD 100). The passage is interesting because it proposes a two-fold division of pleasures. The first sort is said to please the stomach and sexual

capacities through extravagance (πολυτέλεια) and is compared to the songs of the Sirens in contrast to a second sort which is found in noble things and those necessary to life and which is compared to the harmony of the Muses. This division of pleasures appears to be a later invention and certainly does not match what is said about pleasures in the *Precepts* (lines 64–9 above). Diodorus Siculus also makes πολυτέλεια an important part of his account of Pythagoreanism in Book 10 of his history. At 10.7 Pythagoras is reported to have urged that his followers pursue simplicity, because extravagance (πολυτέλεια) destroys not only men's wealth but also their bodies. This is true because most diseases arise from indigestion and indigestion is caused by extravagance. In an earlier passage (10.3.3) Pythagoras is reported to have turned those who associated with him away from extravagance and luxury (πολυτελείας καὶ τρυφῆς). Thus, as in the case of luxury (τρυφή), which is discussed above in the commentary on line 86, it is interesting that the theme of extravagance (πολυτέλεια) is not more developed in the *Pythagorean Precepts*, where the noun never appears and the adjective only appears once here to describe “extravagant” housing.

Line 87 – ποικίλης: For the meaning of this word, see the note on fragment 8, line 13 and fragment 3, line 1. As applied to housing, “elaborate” seems to be the best translation to convey the connotations of something complex, varied and intricately worked.

Line 88 – σκευῶν τε καὶ ποτηρίων: The basic point is that a desire for extravagant and superfluous drinking cups and dining equipment is not a natural desire. Both of these words are common already in the fifth century. In itself σκεῦος is a very general word that can refer to vessels or implements of any kind and in the plural refers to a complete outfit of some sort, thus in various contexts having the meaning “equipment” or “baggage” (LSJ). On the other hand ποτήριον refers specifically to a drinking cup. Since the two words are joined closely by τε καὶ it seems most likely that σκεῦος would pick out the general range of objects of which ποτήριον is one example. Thus, σκεῦος probably picks out the wide range of utensils used in eating and drinking, and I have accordingly translated as “dining services.” A similar pairing of words is found in fragment 50 of Aristoxenus from his *Life of Archytas* (Archytas A9 Huffman = Athenaeus 545e), where, as part of an argument that novelty contributes to pleasure, a list of inventions is given which includes ἱματίων καὶ στρωμάτων καὶ ποτηρίων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων σκευῶν. In this context σκεῦος is not as closely tied to ποτήριον and may thus have a broader meaning of “furnishings.”

Line 88 – διακόνων: By servants the Pythagoreans probably have in mind something like the list Plato gives at *Republic* 373c, which includes cosmeticians, barbers, cooks and chefs.

Line 89 – **θρεμμάτων τῶν εἰς τροφήν ἀνηκόντων**: For the verb ἀνήκω with εἰς meaning “connected with” or “pertaining to” see Demosthenes 60.3 where he refers to “the things connected with virtue” (τῶν εἰς ἀρετὴν ἀνηκόντων). Here the Pythagoreans are talking about “animals connected with food” or more idiomatically “animals raised for food.” The idea is that it is natural to desire to eat readily available animals but to go out of one’s way to find exotic animals to eat is not natural. This point is made in more detail in lines 104–9.

Line 91 – **καθόλου δέ**: For the usage of this expression, see the commentary on line 1 of fragment 2. It is used here to draw attention to an important subsidiary point in the discussion of desire.

Line 91 – **τῶν περὶ ἄνθρωπον παθῶν σχεδόν**: A very similar qualifying phrase appears in lines 77–8 (καὶ σχεδὸν τῶν περὶ ἄνθρωπον). In the case of those lines it is possible to compare the text with fragment 3 preserved in Stobaeus, and the comparison shows that the qualifying phrase was introduced by Iamblichus or his source, so that it seems quite likely that this phrase in line 91 is also an intrusion into the text of the *Precepts*. The style of the *Precepts* is to make bold pronouncements and Iamblichus or his source tends to introduce qualifications to these strong assertions.

Line 92 – **μηδαμοῦ ἵστασθαι**: It is noteworthy that Aristoxenus, in the *Harmonics*, uses this expression twice (14.7 and 14.14 Da Rios) to describe the voice as seeming to the hearing “to stand still nowhere,” thus producing a continuous movement. It is tempting to suppose that Aristoxenus was influenced by his familiarity with the use of this expression in the Pythagorean account of desire to use it in his account of the voice, but it may be mere coincidence.

Lines 92–3 – **προάγειν εἰς ἄπειρον**: The description of desire as stopping nowhere and advancing without limit is unusual. There is no exact parallel for the expression προάγειν εἰς ἄπειρον, but there is no difficulty in supposing it possible in the fourth century. The verb προάγω is frequently used transitively with the preposition εἰς to describe someone as leading someone or something into something, e.g., trouble (Xen. *HG* 2.3.31.4). The intransitive use of the verb is much rarer than the transitive but was clearly possible in the fourth century, since Aristotle (*Ph.* 184a19) uses it to say that it is necessary to advance (προάγειν) from what is less clear by nature but clearer to us to what is clearer by nature (ἐπὶ τὰ σαφέστερα). Xenophon (*Eq.* 9.3.6) uses the verb intransitively of a rider advancing to a quicker pace (εἰς τὸ θάττον προάγειν). Even if we are perhaps to understand the horse as the object in this latter case, the example shows how an intransitive use developed.

Limiters and unlimiteds were the basic principles of Philolaus' metaphysical scheme in the second half of the fifth century and figure prominently in Aristotle's account of fifth-century Pythagoreanism. Indeed, Philolaus argues that all things are either limiters, unlimiteds or some combination of the two (fr. 2 Huffman). Philolaus himself does not apply the terms in an ethical context in the surviving fragments, but the Pythagoreans who are likely to be the source for the *Precepts*, the Pythagoreans whom Aristoxenus met around 350 BC and whom he called the last of the Pythagoreans, are described as pupils of Philolaus and his pupil Eurytus (Diog. Laert. 8.46 = fr. 19 Wehrli). Thus, it is not at all surprising that these Pythagoreans should have applied the concept of the unlimited to desire.

There are some parallels to this assertion in the *Precepts* that desire advances without limit. First, Plato, in the *Philebus*, explicitly puts pleasure (but not desire) in the class of the unlimited (27e, 28a, 31a, 41d) and Epicurus later appears to respond to this classification in saying that while the flesh takes the limits of pleasure to be unlimited, the intellect corrects this reasoning (*Sent.* 20). There is an even closer parallel to the *Precepts'* description of desire as advancing without limit in a passage of Aristotle. At *Politics* 1267b4, Aristotle asserts that it is the nature of desire to be unlimited (ἄπειρος γὰρ ἡ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας φύσις) and that the majority of people live to fulfil this desire. Aristotle, however, never says anything like this as part of his central account of desire (ἐπιθυμία – e.g., at *de An.* 412b2), but only in this one specific context in the *Politics*.

Line 93 – εὐθύς ἐκ νεότητος: This phrase appears to occur only here in all of Greek literature. It is, however, very much in keeping with a number of other passages in the *Precepts*. The Pythagoreans emphasize repeatedly the necessity for moral training starting “straight from youth.” Fragment 2 uses the similar expression εὐθύς ἐκ παίδων in line 15 to make the point that it is necessary “right from childhood” even to have a diet that is well ordered. Fragment 4 similarly enjoins that people be kept busy with training “while still children” (ἐτι παῖδας – line 8) so as not to have time to think about sex. In light of the Pythagorean age groupings that appear in fragment 2 and earlier here in fragment 9 (lines 14–59), it is reasonable to ask whether a difference was intended between εὐθύς ἐκ παίδων, as referring just to the youngest age grouping and εὐθύς ἐκ νεότητος, which would refer to the second age group, young men. Such a suggestion is not in the end convincing, however, since the second age group appears to begin around twenty, and the statement here in lines 93–4 would then be that it was only starting with this group of twenty-year-olds that it was necessary to pay attention, so that the young desire the right things. Surely such training can begin earlier and we would expect the Pythagoreans to want it to begin earlier given their emphasis on training of children in other respects. Thus it would appear

that εὐθύς ἐκ νεότητος does not make a reference to the technical Pythagorean age group of “young men” but rather is a looser expression, “straight from youth,” and another way of saying “from childhood” or “from a young age.”

Lines 93–4 – τῶν ἀναφυομένων: This verb is particularly applied to grass and other plants (Hdt. 4.58.2). When applied to human beings it appears to keep the plant metaphor alive and to refer to something springing up suddenly or surprisingly. Thus, the historian Pherecydes used it of the men that sprang up from the seeds of the dragon that Cadmus sowed into the earth (fr. 44c.2). Isocrates (13.19.1) refers to “the sophists who have lately sprung up” (οἱ . . . ἄρτι τῶν σοφιστῶν ἀναφύμενοι). In Plato’s *Theaetetus* (180c1), Theodorus says that Heracliteans do not have pupils but grow up of themselves (αὐτόματοι ἀναφύονται). Why then did the Pythagoreans use this word in this context? It may be that they are appealing to its connotation of sudden growth that is hard to control and hence in need of attention.

Lines 94–5 – ὅπως ἐπιθυμήσουσι μὲν ὦν δεῖ, φεύξονται δὲ τῶν ματαίων τε καὶ περιέργων ἐπιθυμιῶν: The manuscripts have ἐπιθυμήσωσι and φύζονται. The latter form is nonsense and the easiest correction is Rhode’s φεύξονται. It is true that it is rare for this verb to be used meaning “flee from” with the genitive alone and without a preposition (LSJ s.v.), but Rohde points to Homer *Od.* 1.18 and Sophocles *Ph.* 1044. Cobet suggested ἀπέξονται (“avoid,” “keep away from”), which works better with the genitive but is further from the manuscript reading. Deubner reads φυλάσσονται (“guard against”) which is closer to the manuscripts than Cobet but not that much more common with the bare genitive than Rohde’s reading and a little further from the manuscripts. The manuscript reading of the second verb clearly points to a future indicative while the former form is an aorist subjunctive. The most common construction in such ὅπως clauses is the future (Smyth section 2211) but the subjunctive can also be found (Smyth 1956, section 2214). Deubner kept the subjunctive of the manuscripts for the first verb and emended the second verb to a subjunctive, presumably on the principle of preserving the *lectio difficilior*. However, since Rohde’s reading is clearly preferable for the second verb and a subjunctive form there is not possible on the future stem, it seems better to follow Cobet’s emendation and read the more standard future for the first verb form.

Line 95 – ματαίων: This adjective is used here and in line 98 below to describe desires as “vain.” It is not found commonly elsewhere to describe desires, although Plato does use it at *Resp.* 554a8, where vain desires are contrasted with necessary desires. Epicurus talks of empty desires but uses the adjective κενός rather than μάταιος (*Ep. Men.* 127–32).

Line 95 – ἀτάρακτοι: This form of the adjective is not particularly common at any time, but it appears already in Xenophon (*Cyr.* 2.1.31) and Plato (*Ti.* 47c). It is found only here in Iamblichus so it is not likely to be his insertion. The form ἀτάραχος is more common and is used by Aristotle (*EN* 1117a31: “Of the courageous man as undisturbed in the presence of terrors”) and Epicurus (*Sent. Vat.* 79 – ὁ ἀτάραχος ἑαυτῷ καὶ ἑτέρῳ ἀόχλητος. “The one who is undisturbed in himself is also no trouble to another”). Elsewhere in the *Precepts*, the related verb ταρασσω is used to describe the thought processes of those who have inborn bad luck in fragment 7. Their thought “is never borne towards the target but is always disturbed” (διανοίας . . . ἀεὶ ταρασσομένης). Thus, it is clearly the case that an undisturbed mind was one of the goals of the Pythagorean way of life. This ideal is expressed in different language in *VP* 96 (see the section on subsidiary fragments), where the Pythagoreans say that it is disturbing (θορυβῶδες) to be pushed into crowds immediately after having arisen and urge that the individual should settle his own soul and put his own thoughts in order before meeting anyone else.

Line 96 – καθαροί: This adjective is used, as here, with the genitive to mean “clear” or “free of” in authors of the fifth and fourth centuries (e.g., Antiphon 2.4.11; *Pl. Resp.* 496d). In the *Cratylus* (404a) Plato refers to souls coming to Hades as “pure of the evils and desires of the body” (καθαρά . . . τῶν περὶ τὸ σῶμα κακῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν), which is a good parallel for the Pythagorean description of the young as “pure of such desires” here in the *Precepts*. Since Aristoxenus refers to the Pythagoreans as employing *katharsis* of the body by medicine and of the soul by music in fragment 26, one might be tempted to suppose that the reference here to the young as “free from such desires” presupposes a Pythagorean doctrine of *katharsis* (purification) through music. This temptation should be resisted. It is doubtful that fragment 26 came from the *Precepts*. Wehrli (1967: 15) assigns it to *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. Moreover, this occurrence in line 96 of fragment 9 is the only appearance of καθαρός or related words in the surviving fragments of the *Precepts*, which suggests that purification was not a prominent theme in them. Thus, it is most likely that καθαρός is used here as a simple adjective meaning “pure of,” which does carry some of the overtones of ritual purity attached to the general use of the Greek word but without any implication of an elaborate Pythagorean theory of purification lurking behind it.

Lines 96–8 – καταφρονοῦντες αὐτῶν τε τῶν ἀξιοκαταφρονήτων καὶ τῶν ἐνδεδμεμένων ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις: It is difficult to be sure whether αὐτῶν τε τῶν ἀξιοκαταφρονήτων refers to “people who are themselves worthy of being despised” or whether the reference is to “things that are in themselves

worthy to be despised.” Certainly the preceding sentence made no mention of people, so that the latter translation might seem better, but, in the second half of the sentence, “those bound up in desires” clearly must refer to people. Since τε . . . καί binds the two parts of the sentence together closely and the second part does refer to people, it is best to take both parts of the sentence as referring to people.

Line 97 – ὄξιοκαταφρονήτων: A TLG search indicates that this word appears only here in Greek literature. This is exactly the sort of compound word that might be expected to be coined in such a context: “despising those worthy of being despised.”

Lines 97–8 – τῶν ἐνδεσμένων ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις: The verb ἐνδέω can refer to the literal binding of something in something else, e.g., an offering bound in wheat straw (Hdt. 4.33.2). It is also used metaphorically, however, and, although there is no exact parallel for the expression “bound up in desires,” which is used in this line of the *Precepts*, Plato’s reference to the lives of men being bound up in feelings of pleasure and pain (*Leg.* 733d3) is a similar idea.

Line 98 – μάλιστα δ’ εἶναι κατανοῆσαι τάς τε ματαίους: It is difficult to be sure of the precise construction here. Dillon and Hershbell appear to take εἶναι as showing possibility and translate “most discernable are the vain . . .” (1991: 2009). This does not fit the general tone of command of the *Precepts* very well, however. It makes more sense in light of that tone to take μάλιστα δ’ εἶναι as “are especially” and κατανοῆσαι as a limiting infinitive. Such infinitives are a reflection of an older use of the infinitive as a dative and are commonly active in form where a passive might be expected (Smyth 1956, section 2006). Thus the literal translation would be “especially for discerning are the vain,” or more idiomatically “especially to be discerned are the vain.” Brisson and Segonds (1996: 111) seem to interpret the text along these lines when they translate “il faut surtout détecter,” although they do not explain this translation.

Both here and in line 119 below κατανοέω seems to emphasize the ability to “detect” or “recognize” something, which derives from the basic meaning of the verb, “observe well” or “apprehend” (LSJ). Uses where the verb means “detect” appear already in Thucydides (3.66.2.3), who uses the verb frequently. Aristoxenus uses the verb about ten times in the *Elementa harmonica*, sometimes with the meaning “understand” (e.g., 36.15) but also with a meaning of “realize,” (e.g., 57.10), which approaches the meaning “detect” here in the *Precepts*.

Line 100 – τῶν ἐν ἐξουσίαις ἀναστρεφομένων: There does not appear to be any exact parallel for this phrase. ἐξουσία can mean on the one hand “power,” “authority,” “office” or “magistracy” or, on the other hand, “abundance” of

means or resources. In the plural, and especially with the preposition ἐν, it refers primarily to power, especially power to do whatever one wants. Thus, Isocrates observes that “those who have gained the greatest power” (τοὺς . . . ἐν πλείσταις ἐξουσίαις γεγενημένους) have been involved in the greatest disasters (8.104.3 – see also 12.40.6). Later in Diodorus, the phrase οἱ ἐν ἐξουσίαις just means “those in power” (e.g., 18.50.1). The verb ἀναστρέφω in the passive means “to dwell in a place,” “to go about (in public)” and “to be engaged in.” The rare compound ἐναναστρέφω is used in fragment 2, line 12 of the *Precepts* to describe old men as “engaged in reflection” (see the note *ad loc.*). Thus, τῶν ἐν ἐξουσίαις ἀναστρεφόμενων here in line 100 should have the meaning “those engaged in power” or “those employing power.” It is true that in the next lines the *Precepts* refer to “such children and men and women,” which appears awkward because children and usually women would not have been engaged in power. The idea, however, is that we are talking about children and wives of men in power, who thus have to a great extent the power to do whatever they wish because of the power of their fathers and husbands. With this in mind perhaps it is best to understand τῶν ἐν ἐξουσίαις ἀναστρεφόμενων as referring to “those who go about in power,” i.e. “those who live a life of power.”

Line 101 – τὴν ψυχὴν . . . ὀρμᾶν: Desire has been defined above (line 73, cf. fr. 3) as “a movement of the soul (τῆς ψυχῆς) towards something and an impulse” (ὀρμὴν), so that it is appropriate for the Pythagoreans to talk of desires in terms of the soul (τὴν ψυχὴν) eagerly pursuing (ὀρμᾶν) something here. The soul is not the sum total of all psychic faculties but rather a specific psychic faculty that is precisely the seat of emotions and desires. The word ψυχὴ also appears in this same sense in line 111 below. See also *VP* 96 in the subsidiary fragments. For the Pythagorean conception of ψυχὴ see the commentary on fragment 3, lines 3–4. The verb ὀρμάω is used in a similar way in fragment 10, line 26. For the concept of ὀρμὴ, see also the commentary on fragment 3, line 4.

Line 102 – τοιούτων παίδων τε καὶ ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικῶν: This is another instance which shows that the Pythagoreans do not just think of men in their *Precepts* but of also of women. Boys and girls are presumably included in παίδων. See also the commentary on line 100 above.

Line 102 – καθόλου δέ: For the usage of this expression, see the commentary on line 1 of fragment 2. It is used here as in line 91 above to draw attention to an important subsidiary point in the discussion of desire, here the varied range of human desires.

Line 103 – ποικιλώτατον: See fragment 8 and especially the commentary on line 13.

Line 103 – τὸ ἀνθρώπινον γένος: This expression appears again in line 106 and also in fragment 8, line 7 of the *Precepts* (= Iambl. VP 174.6). It is frequently used in Plato to refer to “the human race” (e.g., *Phd.* 82b7; *Chrm.* 173c7; *Cra.* 431a), but surprisingly it is never used by Aristotle. It appears in only two other passages in Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (5.12 and 99.8), besides the three passages mentioned above which derive from the *Precepts*, and nowhere else in the genuine work of Iamblichus.

Line 104 – σημείον δὲ ἐναργές: There is no other appearance of σημείον in the *Precepts*. It does appear once with ἐναργές in Iamblichus (*Myst.* 5.11.13), but it also appears in fourth-century authors such as Demosthenes (19.115.7) so that there is no problem with Aristoxenus having used this expression.

Lines 104–5 – τῶν προσφερομένων: Given the examples that follow it is clear that the reference here and in the further uses of the verb in lines 112, 115 and 118 is to food and drink as in fragment 2, line 16, where the commentary should be consulted.

Line 105 – ποικιλίαν: See the commentary on fragment 8, line 13.

Line 105 – ἀπέραντον: This adjective appears first in Pindar and is found about ten times each in Plato and Aristotle. It appears nowhere else besides here and in line 106 either in Aristoxenus or in Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. Iamblichus uses it four times in his other works. It modifies πλῆθος, as it does here, also in Aristotle *EE* 1215b29, and a handful of times in later Greek.

Line 107 – σαρκοφαγία παντοδαπή: This noun appears some fifty times in Greek. The earliest use elsewhere is in Aristotle, where it appears once at *HA* 594b4. Plutarch wrote a treatise entitled *On Flesheating* (περὶ σαρκοφαγίας), which begins “Do you ask why Pythagoras abstained from eating flesh?” (σαρκοφαγίας). Porphyry uses the word several times in his *On Abstinence from Killing Animals*. The word appears nowhere else in Iamblichus. It would not be at all surprising if this noun first appeared in a Pythagorean text, in light of Pythagorean interest in dietary taboos, which is already attested in the *acusmata*.

The adjective παντοδαπός, meaning “of all sorts,” goes back to Sappho and is common in fourth-century authors such as the orators, Xenophon, Plato and Aristotle. Aristoxenus uses it three times in his *Harmonics* and once in his *Rhythmics* but the use here in line 107 and below in line 109 are the only two uses in the *Precepts*. Iamblichus uses it another six times in other passages of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* and a further twelve in his other works.

Line 107 – ἔργον εἶναι εὐρεῖν: This idiom meaning “it is difficult to find” is found in several fourth-century authors, e.g., Demosthenes 20.41.9; Pl. *Ti.* 28c4, but this is the only place it appears in Aristoxenus or Iamblichus.

Lines 108–9 – τῶν τε χειρσαίων καὶ τῶν πτηνῶν καὶ τῶν ἐνύδρων ζώων: Herodotus (2.123) already has this three-fold classification of animals using the same language except that he uses θαλάσσια rather than ἐνύδρα to designate water animals. Plato lists four types of animals adding a heavenly type (i.e. the gods) and giving an order that starts from the top: heavenly, winged, water, land. He uses the same terminology as Aristoxenus but a different order. This four-fold division of animals is repeated in the later tradition (Stob. 1.43). Aristotle also talks of winged, water and land animals using these terms (*HA* 487a23–30). None of these three adjectives appear elsewhere in the genuine works of Iamblichus or Aristoxenus. In the *Theologumena Arithmeticae*, which has sometimes been ascribed to Iamblichus, in one place (19.5) it is asserted that there are three kinds of animals, with a different term being used for land animal (πεζὸν πτηνὸν ἐνύδρον) and in another (34.11) there are five kinds, with only the term ἐνύδρων overlapping.

Line 109 – σκευασίας: This word, meaning “preparation,” is not very common. It appears nowhere else in Aristoxenus or Iamblichus. It does appear already as early as Plato (*Ly.* 209e), so there is no problem with assuming that the fourth-century Pythagoreans or Aristoxenus used it.

Line 110 – χυμῶν: This word can mean “juice” of plants and is, of course, the word for animal juices or “humors,” in the Hippocratic corpus. It is, however, also used meaning “flavor” in Aristotle (e.g., *Ph.* 245a9) as it is here.

Line 110 – εἰκότως: A very common word in the fifth and fourth centuries. For the meaning “understandably” or “naturally” see, e.g., Thucydides 2.54.3.3.

Line 110 – μανικόν: The word appears only here and in line 116 below in Aristoxenus and in Iamblichus. It is fairly common in the late fifth and early fourth centuries, appearing already in Aristophanes, Isocrates and Plato. The common meaning is “mad” or “crazy.” It is, for instance, used to describe Chaerephon and his impulsive actions (*Chrm.* 153b2).

Line 111 – πολύμορφον: This word appears nowhere else in Aristoxenus or Iamblichus. Its first uses occur already in the fifth and fourth centuries, however. The earliest would seem to be Hippocrates *Aër.* 12. After that the earliest uses are eight instances in Aristotle. Perhaps most noticeable is the assertion at *EE* 1239b12 that “the good is simple but the bad is multiform”

(πολύμορφον). The other uses all come from the biological treatises, e.g., at HA 606b18 the wild animals of Lybia are said to be “most varied in form” (πολυμορφότατα).

Line 111 – τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς κίνησιν: Κίνησις appears frequently already in the Hippocratic corpus and Plato. It is also common in Aristoxenus’ works on music, although it appears nowhere else in the fragments of the *Precepts*. Staab (2002: 405, n. 998) suggests that there is a connection to the Stoic definition of πάθος as ἡ ἄλογος καὶ παρὰ φύσιν ψυχῆς κίνησις (Diog. Laert. 7.110.7–9). This is totally unconvincing. Both Plato (e.g., *Ti.* 88c4) and Aristotle (e.g., *de An.* 406a26) already refer to “motions of the soul,” and the distinctive Stoic features (ἄλογος καὶ παρὰ φύσιν) are precisely what are lacking from this passage of the *Precepts*. Here in the *Precepts*, soul (ψυχή) is likely to refer not to the whole soul but specifically to the psychic faculty that was responsible for emotions and desires according to Philolaus (fr. 13), who was the teacher of the Pythagoreans responsible for the *Precepts*. See the commentary on τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἐπιφορὰν τινα τῆς ψυχῆς in fragment 3, line 4.

Lines 111–12 – τὸ ἀνθρώπινον φύλον: This phrase seems to be an alternate way of saying τὸ ἀνθρώπινον γένος (see lines 103 and 106 above). It is surprisingly rare. It appears only here in the *Precepts* and nowhere else in Iamblichus. It does appear already in the fifth century in Antiphon, its earliest appearance (3.1.2, “Ὁ τε γὰρ θεὸς βουλόμενος ποιῆσαι τὸ ἀνθρώπινον φύλον – “For God when he wanted to make the human tribe”). In Antiphon some manuscripts read γένος rather than φύλον, but φύλον is clearly to be preferred as the *lectio difficilior*. It is more likely that it was replaced by γένος, which appears a number of times in Plato (see the note on line 103), than the reverse. After Antiphon and Aristoxenus, the phrase does not appear again until Celsus in the second century AD, but it is rare in late antiquity as well.

Line 112 – ἰδίου: The meaning “separate” or “distinct” is found already in Herodotus (e.g., 4.106). Aristoxenus uses this meaning frequently in his musical writings (e.g., *Harm.* 60.15 Da Rios).

Lines 113 and 119 – διαθέσεως: See the commentary on line 36 above.

Line 113 – αἵτιον: The use of this adjective with an object in the genitive to mean “responsible for” or “the cause of” is common in Herodotus (see Powell 1966 s.v.). It appears again in lines 114 and 118 and in fr. 11, line 28.

Line 114 – παραχρῆμα: This is a common word in fifth and fourth centuries prose. It occurs nowhere else in Aristoxenus and only appears in one other place in Iamblichus (*Protr.* 101.4).

Line 114 – ἀλλοιώσεις: The earliest uses of this noun are found in Plato who uses it five times, in some cases to mean “difference” (*Resp.* 454c) and in others “alteration” (*Tht.* 181d). It becomes very common in Aristotle, and Aristoxenus himself uses it twice to mean “alteration” in the *Harmonics* (50.4 and 92.11). It might thus seem to be likely to be Aristoxenus’ word rather than the word of the Pythagoreans of the first half of the fourth century. It appears nowhere else in the *Precepts*. The verb ἀλλοιόω is, however, used with the meaning “change” in the Hippocratic corpus (*Praec.* 9) and Thucydides (2.59), so it does not seem impossible that the fourth-century Pythagoreans had already used the related noun. The word appears in only one other passage of Iamblichus.

Line 114 – συνορᾶν: This verb can mean simply “to see” but often has the more specialized meaning of “detect,” “notice,” or “discern” (e.g., *Dem.* 59.18; *Aeschin.* 3.75), which clearly works best here. The effects of wine are so immediate and great that people easily “detect” them, whereas they “do not perceive” (ἀγνοεῖν – line 118) the effects of other foods and drink. The verb is used again below in line 120, where it is evidently a close synonym of κατανοῆσαι (“observe well” or “apprehend” – LSJ), which supports the translation “notice” or “discern.” Aristoxenus uses the verb frequently in the *Elementa Harmonica* of points that are easy or difficult to see or comprehend (19.4; 27.13) but it also has the meaning “discern” (55.2).

Line 114 – οἶον: The use of this word to introduce an example seems to be a characteristic of the *Precepts*. It appears in two cases in the fragments preserved in Stobaeus: fragment 4, line 7 and fragment 5, line 6.

Line 115 – μέχρι μὲν τινος: This expression, meaning “up to a point,” appears in the Hippocratic corpus (*VM* 19.5; *Aph.* 3.18.4) and becomes very common in Aristotle (e.g., *EN* 1150a17) and Theophrastus. More noticeably, Aristoxenus himself seems to have favored it. It appears in a total of four passages in Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* and every one is a passage either explicitly identified as from Aristoxenus (249.10 = fr. 18 Wehrli, probably from *The Life of Pythagoras*, and 129.6, which is identical) or a passage that on independent grounds is likely to derive from Aristoxenus (here and at 182.2 = fr. 10, line 29). The expression appears only once elsewhere in all of Iamblichus. In addition to these four passages of Aristoxenus’ works on the Pythagoreans the expression also appears in *Elementa Harmonica* 61.2.

Line 116 – ἰλαρωτέρους: This adjective picks out the emotion of cheerfulness, which is usually presented as a moderate emotion. It appears in the late fifth century in Critias (DK B6) as well as in Xenophon (*Ages.* 11.2.5) and Theophrastus (*Char.* 17.9) in the fourth century, but it is never used in the

genuine works of Plato or Aristotle. The passage from Critias praises a good sort of drinking practiced by Spartan youths, who drink only so much as to lead to cheerful hope (ἰλαρὰν ἐλπίδα [Emperius; ἀσπίδα Mss.]), friendly speech and moderate laughter (DK B6 15–17). A similar context of moderation is present here in the *Precepts*, where wine, when indulged in up to a certain point, merely makes people more cheerful. The adjective appears in only one other place in Iamblichus, a passage in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (196.5) that has, on independent grounds, also been regarded by scholars as derived from Aristoxenus (Rohde 1871–2 = 1901: 160), although it is more likely to come from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* than the *Precepts*, since it is descriptive rather than prescriptive. In this passage the Pythagoreans are said not to be at one time cheerful (ἰλαροί) and at another downcast but to maintain an even and calm joy.

Line 117 – ἀσχημονεστέρους: This adjective picks up on one of the three main forms of mistaken desire as set out in fragment 3, line 7, ἀσχημοσύνη or “shamelessness.” See the commentary on lines 6–11 of fragment 3. Iamblichus dropped out this earlier classification of mistaken desire, when quoting from this section of the *Precepts*, but it probably originally appeared after ἀνθρώπων in line 80. See the overview of section 5, lines 71–112 of fragment 9 above.

Line 117 – ἐνδεικνύμενα: The use of this verb in the middle to mean “display,” “exhibit,” or “manifest” is found already in Thucydides (4.126) and Aristophanes (*Pl.* 785). Aristoxenus does use the verb in the same way in a fragment from one of his other works on the Pythagoreans, probably the *Life of Pythagoras* (fr. 18.18 Wehrli = Iambl. *VP* 249.9). However, it may be that the two complete sentences in lines 117–19 are an insertion by Iamblichus (see below).

Line 117 – δύναμιν: Fifth- and fourth-century authors already use this noun with the meaning “power” or “capacity,” which it has here (see *Hp. VM* 14 and *Dem.* 22.11). It is of course used frequently in other works both by Aristoxenus and Iamblichus.

Line 118 – ἀγνοεῖν: This verb is used in contrast with συνορᾶν (“discern,” “detect,” or “notice”) in line 114 and thus has its base meaning of “not to perceive” or “not to recognize.” Such uses go back to Homer and are also found in fifth- and fourth-century authors, e.g., Thucydides 2.49. It appears with this same meaning in fragment 10, line 46 and with the meaning “be ignorant of” in line 10 above.

Lines 118–19 – γίνεσθαι δὲ πᾶν τὸ προσερχθὲν αἰτίον τινος ἰδίου διαθέσεως: This is almost identical in meaning to the assertion in lines 112–13 and the language is very similar as well (ἐκαστον γὰρ δὴ τῶν προσφερομένων ἰδίου τινὸς διαθέσεως αἰτίον γίνεσθαι). It is possible that Iamblichus introduced the explicit assertion that people do not notice the effect of food other than wine in line 115

and that he rounds off this elaboration on the text with this paraphrase of the point made in lines 112–13.

Line 119 – διὸ δὴ καί: See the note on line 80 above.

Line 119 – μεγάλης σοφίας: In this context of recognizing the effects of various foods and drinks σοφία is better understood as “skill” than “wisdom.” It is already applied to skill in the art of medicine by Pindar (*P.* 3.54).

Lines 119–20 – κατανοῆσαι τε καὶ συνιδεῖν: For συνιδεῖν see the note on line 114. For κατανοῆσαι see the note on line 98 above.

Line 120 – ποίοις τε καὶ πόσοις: Aristoxenus uses the similar phrase “how many and of what sort” (e.g., 10.13 – ἀποδεικνύντας πόσα τ’ ἐστὶ καὶ ποῖ’ ἄττα) four times in the *Elementa harmonica* (see also 13.5; 45.20; 82.2). Iamblichus does not appear to use such phrases anywhere else in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* or in his other writings.

Lines 121–2 – Ἀπόλλωνός τε καὶ Παιῶνος: The name Paeon (Paeon) appears already in Linear B (Burkert 1985: 43). Burkert says, “Among the Greeks, Paeon signifies a dance and hymn with a specific rhythm which is endowed with an absolving and healing power, as well as a god present in the hymn who is equated with Apollo” (1985: 44; see also 145). In the *Iliad*, Paeon is presented as the physician of the gods who heals the wounds of Hades and Ares (5.401 and 899). Paeon appears in only one other place in Iamblichus, in a report that is likely to go back to Nicomachus (Rohde 1871–2 = 1901: 130–1), in which it is reported that some people said of Pythagoras, that he was the Pythian Apollo, some that he was the Hyperborean Apollo and others that he was Paeon (*VP* 30.17).

Line 122 – τῶν περὶ Ἀσκληπιόν: It is striking that only religious figures associated with healing are mentioned (Apollo, Paeon and Asclepius) and that there is no allusion to modern “Hippocratic” medicine. Certainly the description of each of the foods and drinks as the cause of their own distinctive condition in the body, which is emphasized in the preceding lines, is characteristic of rational medicine rather than religious healing. Thus, towards the beginning of the Hippocratic treatise *On Regimen*, it is asserted that the physician must know “whatever power each of the foods and drinks in our regimen has” (1.2). For other evidence concerning Pythagorean medicine, see the overview of lines 71–122 given above.

Since this reference to religious rather than rational medicine appears anomalous and since there is no reference to names of specific gods elsewhere in the *Precepts*, it seems likely that this sentence is an insertion by Iamblichus. The probability that this is the case is increased by the fact that the sentence

comes at the end of the section where we might expect Iamblichus to add a comment.

Line 124 – **περὶ δέ**: See the note on line 1.

Line 124 – **γεννήσεως**: It seems likely that Iamblichus or his source used this word to replace Aristoxenus' γενέσεως παίδων, which is preserved in Stobaeus, and thus regularized this line with γεννήσεις in line 146 below. For this point and for the meaning and translation of the word see the note on fragment 4, line 1.

Lines 124–9: These lines are substantially the same as the beginning of fragment 4. See the commentary there.

Lines 129–30 – **τούς τε παῖδας καὶ τὰς παρθένους**: This combination of nouns is a common way to refer to “boys and girls” and appears already in Herodotus (3.97.19).

Lines 130–1 – **ἐν πόνοις τε καὶ γυμνασίοις καὶ καρτερίαις**: These three nouns are found together only here in Greek literature. However, the first two (“toils” and “[athletic] exercises”) are found together in several texts from the fifth and fourth centuries (Hp. *Morb.* 1.21.31; Pl. *Leg.* 646c7; Arist. *Pr.* 882a17). The last, “tests of endurance,” is associated with “toils” in the fourth century: “endurance . . . is undergoing toils for the sake of what is fine” (καρτερία . . . ὑπομονὴ πόνων ἕνεκα τοῦ καλοῦ – Pl. *Def.* 412c1). The plural of καρτερία is somewhat rare but is again found in fourth-century authors (Pl. *Resp.* 390d; Isoc. 9.42.4). There are no close ties to peculiarly Iamblican usage in the usage of these adjectives, so there is no reason to see this usage as late. The fourth-century parallels suggest that the language is that of the *Precepts* rather than something inserted by Iamblichus.

Lines 131–2 – **τροφὴν προσφέροντας τὴν ἀρμόττουσαν**: The combination of προσφέρω with τροφή appears in two other places in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (203.8 and 211.6), but in both cases the passages are likely to derive from the *Precepts*, so the usage of this language in this line is another indication that lines 129–32 are derived from the *Precepts* rather than composed by Iamblichus. For the use of προσφέρω with τροφή see the commentary on fragment 2, lines 15–16 of the *Precepts*.

Line 132 – **φιλοπόνῳ τε καὶ σώφρονι καὶ καρτερικῷ βίῳ**: These three adjectives (“devoted to toil, temperate and patiently enduring”) are not found together in any other Greek text, but pairs of them (or their cognate verbs and nouns) are found together in authors of the fourth century, when the *Precepts* were composed, and they do not appear together elsewhere in Iamblichus. It therefore seems most likely that these lines were moved here

from elsewhere in the *Precepts* rather than being a comment composed by Iamblichus himself. The parallels to fourth-century authors are extensive. Thus, in the case of the first two adjectives, Isocrates (1.46) connects toil devoted to virtue (τὸ δὲ περὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν φιλοπονεῖν) with a temperate life (σωφρόνως τὸν αὐτοῦ βίον οἰκονομεῖν). Similarly, Plutarch, at a later date (*Comparison of Aristides and Cato* 4.1.4), remarks that poverty is no reproach, if the poor person is temperate (σώφρονι), industrious (φιλοπόνῳ), just and brave. The first and third adjectives are again found together in Isocrates (2.45.8) where he asserts that most people think that those who do their duty are living lives of endurance and toil (καρτερικούς καὶ φιλοπόνους). The second and third are found together in several passages in Aristotle. At *EN* 1145b14 the temperate man (τὸν σώφρονα) is said to be restrained and enduring (καρτερικόν) and at *EN* 1179b33 Aristotle talks about living in a temperate and enduring way (σωφρόνως καὶ καρτερικῶς). There seems to be no example elsewhere (apart from the parallel passage in Ocellus) of a life described as “devoted to toil” (φιλόπονος) but Plato talks of a temperate life (e.g., *Leg.* 733e – σώφρονα βίον) and the Peripatetic Clearchus of Soli (Athenaeus 13 611b) refers to a life of endurance (καρτερικὸν βίον).

Lines 133–8: These lines are substantially the same as lines 6–12 of fragment 4. See the commentary there.

Lines 138–9 – ἔσσεθαι δὲ τοῦτο, ἔάν τίμιόν τε καὶ καλὸν εἶναι νομίζεται ἡ εὐεξία: This line seems very likely to have been composed by Iamblichus rather than being from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. The term εὐεξία is taken from the *Precepts*, but Iamblichus has radically changed the sentence from what appears in Stobaeus, which is likely to preserve accurately what was found in the *Precepts*, since it is presented as an excerpt. Iamblichus has evidently rewritten the sentence because he sees εὐεξία as playing a different role. In Stobaeus’ version there is a simple prescription that the young should not seek sex before twenty. Good condition (εὐεξία) of the body is then introduced as a benefit of following this precept. Iamblichus turns good condition into a motivating factor for avoiding sex. If the young are taught that good condition is a fine and valuable thing then they will only engage in sex rarely. Iamblichus was evidently particularly interested in the role of good condition in education, since he mentions it in a letter on education to Sopatrus, which is preserved in Stobaeus (2.31.122).

This and the following sentence are natural places for Iamblichus to intervene in the text, since they come at the end of one section that Iamblichus is quoting, just before he evidently starts a new quote by re-establishing the indirect statement with the phrase “they said that” (ἔφασαν) in line 141. There are also some slight hints in the language of the sentence that it was composed by Iamblichus rather than being derived from the *Precepts*. The paired adjectives “fine and

honorable” appear also in Iamblichus at *Myst.* 2.11.62 but nowhere else in the *Precepts*, although they are found in fourth-century authors such as Plato (*Phlb.* 30b7) and Aristotle (*de An.* 402a1) so they are not distinctively Iamblichean.

Lines 139–40 – ἀκρασίαν γὰρ ἅμα καὶ εὐεξίαν οὐ πάνυ γίνεσθαι περὶ τὸν αὐτόν.: Since this sentence is support for the previous sentence, which I have argued was inserted by Iamblichus, it is likely to also be Iamblichus’. This is supported to some extent by the language of the sentence. The noun ἀκρασία appears nowhere else in the fragments of the *Pythagorean Precepts*, either those preserved in Stobaeus or those preserved in Iamblichus. It does appear six other times in Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, including two that are likely to be composed by Iamblichus himself (246.8 and 225.5). The two nouns ἀκρασία and εὐεξία appear together only here in Greek literature except for one passage in Plutarch (*Lycurgus* 14.4.2), where the nudity of Spartan girls is said not to be accompanied by lack of self-control but rather to encourage good condition.

Lines 140–1 – ἐπαινέσθαι δ’ αὐτοῖς ἔφασαν: For the use of ἔφασαν here, see the beginning of the commentary on this fragment. Iamblichus uses ἔφασαν repeatedly throughout sections 200–13 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. It is likely that each time he inserts it he is beginning to quote a new excerpt. Such an assumption works very well here, since he has been following the parallel text in Stobaeus (fr. 4) quite closely and here suddenly introduces material not in Stobaeus. The original text of the *Precepts* will have had a third person form of ἐπαινέω probably in the imperfect. There are, however, no parallels for the expression “they praised x” or “x was praised by them” in the fragments of the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus. It might thus be that Iamblichus has rewritten the passage more extensively and introduced ἐπαινέω, but it seems more likely that, while Aristoxenus usually used other introductory verbs, which indicated what should be done in the *Precepts*, in rare instances like this, he talked instead about what the Pythagoreans praised. The use of the dative of agent αὐτοῖς is surprising, since it is not commonly used except with perfects and verbal adjectives. However, Smyth (1956, section 1490) does give Thucydides 1.51 as a parallel for the use of the dative of agent with an imperfect.

Line 141 – τῶν προϋπαρχόντων νομίμων: There are no exact parallels for this phrase, but a number of fourth-century authors use the very similar προϋπάρχοντες νόμοι (Dem. 21.25.6; Arist. *Pol.* 1292b20). At the beginning of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* 176, Iamblichus uses νομίμοις where the corresponding passage in Stobaeus has νόμοις (fr. 8, line 26). One might suppose that Iamblichus had here too replaced νόμων with νομίμων. However, Aristoxenus uses νόμιμα as a noun outside the *Precepts* in fragment 124. The adjective νόμιμος is used in line 44 above and again just below in line 149 and it appears in

fragment 11, line 27. It is best to translate it “customs” here because the Greeks, or at least the Athenians, did not have any written laws against incest (Cohen 1991: 226). Xenophon identifies the law against incest as a prime example of an unwritten law (*Mem.* 4.4.20).

Lines 141–2 – ἐν ταῖς Ἑλληνικαῖς πόλεσι: There are a number of parallels for this phrase in the fifth and fourth centuries (e.g., Th. 1.17.1.1).

Lines 142–3 – τὸ μήτε μητράσι συγγίνεσθαι μήτε θυγατρὶ μήτ’ ἀδελφῇ: For similar language see Plato *Resp.* 461c1 where he specifically rules out sex with a daughter or a mother (συγγίνεσθαι . . . θυγατρὶ καὶ μητρὶ). As the presentation of the Oedipus story in Athenian drama shows, there was a general abhorrence of sexual relations between parents and children in Greece (e.g., Soph. *OT* 1204–13; Cohen 1991: 225–7; Just 1989: 76–9). The abhorrence was so great that no written law against it was needed and it stood out as an example of a universal unwritten law (see the note on line 146). When it came to relations between siblings, there is evidence that marriages between children of the same father but different mothers did occur in Athens. In Sparta it was children of different fathers and the same mother that could wed (Harrison 1968: 22; Aristophanes, *Clouds* 1372). Despite these possibilities both Plato (*Laws* 838b) and Aristotle (*Pol.* 1262a36) indicate that sex between siblings was generally rejected as well. On the other hand an uncle could marry his niece and it was standard practice for him to do so, if she were the sole heir to her father’s fortune, in order to keep the fortune in the family (Harrison 1968: 10, 132).

The Pythagoreans thus take a similar attitude to Plato and Aristotle in rejecting sex not just between parents and children but also between siblings. The Stoics later permitted both sorts of incest (SVF 1.256 and 3.743–6; Diog. Laert. 7.188 on Chrysippus). The reasons for this are not explicitly stated in the evidence but it is unlikely that they thought that incest was to be practiced in regular Greek society (Long and Sedley 1987: 1.436). The point may be that there are no absolute moral rules, not even the prohibition on incest; it is the right reason of the sage that determines morality and it is possible that in extreme circumstances, incest might be in accord with right reason (Vander Waerd 1994: 300–1). It may even be that the appeal to extreme circumstances is not necessary. The point may be that conventions against incest are not based on reason and are accordingly in themselves of no account in the sage’s reasoning about what to do, although it is unlikely, in fact, that the sage will conclude that practicing incest is the proper course (Vogt 2008: 64). Another suggestion is that incest was to be practiced in the ideal Stoic state where traditional family groupings were abandoned (Gaca 2003: 81).

What is interesting about the Pythagorean view of incest is not that they agreed with the universal rejection of it in Greek society and like Plato and

Aristotle explicitly included relations between siblings. What is noteworthy is their reason for rejecting it, which is given here. They do not claim that incest is shameful or an offense to the gods, as Plato does (*Laws* 838c), but rather that it should be avoided because it is both fine and useful to have as many limitations on sexual behavior as possible. Thus, the idea is not that sexuality is a good and normal activity in the proper circumstances but rather that it is always a suspect activity and should be limited to those circumstances where it is absolutely necessary. One suspects that the Pythagoreans saw sexuality as one of the prime manifestations of the human propensity towards hubristic behavior, which is condemned in fragment 8.

It may seem surprising that the Pythagoreans would bother to give their approval to the universal Greek prohibition on incest. It is an intriguing suggestion that the issue of incest and grounds for prohibiting it had arisen in the late fifth century (Täger 1922: 53) and that the Pythagoreans felt compelled to reaffirm their support of the prohibition and give their reasons for doing so. That Greek contact with foreign cultures such as is attested in Herodotus had led some late fifth-century thinkers to reconsider traditional Greek values such as the prohibition on incest can be seen in *The Contrasting Arguments* (Δισσοὶ Λόγοι), where it is reported that the Persians think it seemly to have sex with a daughter, a mother or a sister, although the Greeks think such things shameful and unlawful (2.15). Euripides, in his *Andromache* (c. 425), has Hermione report that among foreigners “father consorts with daughter, son with mother and sister with brother” and calls on Andromache not to introduce such customs into Greece (173–7). In light of these passages it seems not implausible that some late fifth-century thinkers challenged the traditional Greek prohibition on incest and asked for a clear argument in support of it. The Pythagoreans of the late fifth- and early fourth-century, e.g., Xenophilus, the teacher of Aristoxenus, may then have developed the discussion of incest that we find in the *Precepts* as a response to the challenge. The Pythagoreans do describe incest as contrary to nature (see line 146 below and the note *ad loc.*), but do not base their argument against it on the grounds that it is unnatural. This argument would be open to the objection that its practice in cultures such as that of Persia suggests that it was the product not of nature but of convention. Instead they evidently ruled it out on the grounds that sexuality was inherently dangerous and should have as many restrictions on it as possible, while still allowing for temperate and thoughtful propagation of the species. The view might have been that although Greek society labeled incest as unnatural there was not anything inherently worse about having sex with your mother, daughter or sister than sex with any other woman, but there is also no need for such relationships. It is therefore better to preserve the traditional restrictions on these relationships as another way to curb the dangerous power of sex. This approach is very much in

accord with the statements elsewhere in the *Precepts* that we should follow traditional laws and customs even if they might be somewhat worse than other possible arrangements (fr. 1).

Line 143 – μήτ' ἐν ἱερῷ μήτ' ἐν τῷ φανερῷ: Both expressions are easy to parallel in the fourth century: ἐν τῷ φανερῷ is found seven times in Xenophon (e.g., *HG* 5.3.16.6); ἐν ἱερῷ appears in Plato (*La.* 187e2). In Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* 153–4, Pythagoras is reported to have discussed what to do if blood is spilt in a temple and to have forbidden giving birth or killing even a louse in a temple, but the source for these reports is unknown, so it is hard to know whether they represent early Pythagoreanism or later Pythagoreanism. For the Greek prohibition on intercourse in temples, see Herodotus 2.64 who reports that the Egyptians were the first people to rule out intercourse in temples and that the Greeks and Egyptians were almost the only people to have this rule. According to Herodotus, other peoples argue that animals are allowed by the gods to mate in the temples so that such activity is clearly not displeasing to the gods. A similar argument was later adopted by Chrysippus, who argued that if animals having sex in a temple (συγγινόμενα . . . ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς) do not pollute it then neither do humans (Plutarch, *On Stoic Contradictions* 1045a5). For the Greek rejection of intercourse in public see *Dissoi Logoi* 2.4, where the point is that the same activity, sex, is fine in one circumstance, i.e. in private, and shameful in another, i.e. in public. Xenophon (*Anabasis* 5.4.34) reports that it was the custom of the Mossynoecians to have sex in public. It appears from the passages in Herodotus and Xenophon that some late fifth-century thinkers may have called for a justification of the Greek custom of not having sex in public or in a temple just as they may have done in the case of incest (see the preceding note) and the Pythagorean response was the same. There is nothing inherently wrong with sex in public or in a temple, but the traditional stricture against it is still valuable as a curb on the overweening power of the sex drive.

Lines 143–4 – καλόν τε γὰρ εἶναι καὶ σύμφρον: This pairing of adjectives is found only three times in the fourth century outside of the *Precepts* (Arist. *Top.* 118b32; Xen. *Ap.* 29.6; Lycurg. 130.1). In addition to this present passage, Aristoxenus also uses the pair prominently in fragment 2 of the *Precepts*, which is preserved by Stobaeus. The pair never appears elsewhere in Iamblichus so that, in light of fragment 2, their appearance here is strong evidence that Iamblichus is indeed drawing on the *Precepts* in this passage.

Line 144 – κωλύματα: There are some twenty uses of this noun in the fifth and fourth centuries, mostly in Thucydides (e.g., 4.67) and the Hippocratic corpus. It appears only once elsewhere in Iamblichus.

Line 145 – ἐνεργείας: This word is first used elsewhere by Aristotle and thus its appearance here requires explanation. It can have a non-technical sense of “activity” (*EN* 1094a) as well as more technical philosophical senses such as “actuality” as opposed to “potentiality.” It would be possible that the Pythagoreans had anticipated Aristotle in the non-technical use, but such a use would be unparalleled. One might suppose that Aristoxenus himself had introduced the term, but this seems unlikely, since he never uses it elsewhere in his writings. The most likely explanation of the word’s appearance here is that Iamblichus has introduced it into the text. Iamblichus uses it extensively in his own writing (some ninety times in *On the Mysteries*). It seems likely that Iamblichus, either consciously or unconsciously, used it in place of some other word used by Aristoxenus in the original text of the *Precepts*. Aristoxenus, as reported by Stobaeus in fragment 4, uses the phrase τὸ τοῦ ἀφροδισιάζειν πρᾶγμα to refer to the activity sex and in lines 134–5 above Iamblichus replaced this periphrasis with τὴν τῶν ἀφροδισίων χρεῖαν. It is tempting to suppose that in line 145 Aristoxenus wrote τῆς χρεῖας ταύτης and Iamblichus, who had already used χρεῖαν above, used ἐνεργείας here for variety. Aristoxenus does use the similar expression τὴν τῶν ἀφροδισίων χρῆσιν in his *Life of Socrates* (fr. 54a and 54b). Whatever exact explanation we suppose, however, it seems likely that ἐνεργείας was introduced by Iamblichus.

Lines 145–6 – ὑπελάμβανον δ’, [ὥς ἔοικεν, ἐκεῖνοι οἱ ἄνδρες]: It appears that ὑπελάμβανον (“they supposed”) was one of the more common verbs employed by Aristoxenus to introduce precepts and its appearance here and again in line 149 below indicates that Iamblichus is still drawing on the *Precepts* at least through the beginning of line 151. Aristoxenus uses ὑπελάμβανον in fragment 2 of the *Precepts*, as attested by Stobaeus, and it appears in another passage from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, which is surely derived from the *Precepts* (VP 174 = fr. 8, line 8). On the other hand Aristoxenus never specifies the subject of the third person verbs in the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus, nor does he use qualifying phrases like ὥς ἔοικεν, so that it is likely that ὥς ἔοικεν, ἐκεῖνοι οἱ ἄνδρες is an addition by Iamblichus. It also looks as if Iamblichus has here forgotten that he is in indirect discourse depending on ἔφασαν in line 141 and instead of the awkward double indirect discourse, which he uses in line 141 and elsewhere throughout sections 200–13, reports Aristoxenus directly. This switch in style of reporting and the introduction of an explicit subject might indicate that Iamblichus is turning to a new excerpt that is not continuous with what precedes.

Lines 146–7 – περιαιρεῖν μὲν . . . καταλιμπάνειν δέ: περιαιρεῖν is used widely in the fifth and fourth centuries, mostly in prose. It often has the literal meaning “to take away something that surrounds” or “strip off.” Thus, it is frequently used by

historians of pulling down walls from around a city (e.g., Th. 1.108.4.3) and by Theophrastus, in his botanical works, of stripping off bark from around a tree (e.g., *HP* 3.13.2.5), or more generally of stripping off leaves (*HP* 7.4.7.10) from a plant or pruning limbs from around a tree (*CP* 3.7.3.4). In the Hippocratic corpus it refers to removing the shell from the outside of an egg (*Nature of the Child* 13.14 Littré 1839–61). It can be used in the middle voice of a person removing a ring from around his finger (Polycrates in Hdt. 3.41) or a helmet (Hdt. 2.151) or a crown (Arist. *Ath.* 57.4.5) from around his head. In some cases the emphasis on removing something that literally surrounds something else is lost and the verb means more generally “to strip away” or “deprive.” Thus, it can be used to refer to depriving someone of their property as a legal penalty (Dem. *Against Medias* 138.3) or stripping away someone’s pride and insolence (Dem. *On the False Legation* 325.6).

What is “stripped away” can be contrasted with what is “left afterwards.” Thus, if someone takes away the melody, rhythm and meter from poetry what is left is just speeches (Pl. *Grg.* 502c5). In the *Sophist* Socrates describes their attempt to define the sophist as stripping away from him all common properties and leaving him only with his own peculiar property (264e). In passages of this sort περιαιρεῖν is very often contrasted with some form of the verb λείπω (Pl. *Grg.* 502c5, *Sph.* 264e3, *Phdr.* 231b5) and frequently it is specifically the verb καταλείπω that is used, where the prefix indicates that something is left “behind” or “alone” (Xen. *Mem.* 3.2.4.5; Xen. *Cyr.* 2.1.21.8; Arist. *Cat.* 7a32 and 7b2; Arist. *Metaph.* 1061a29; Thphr. *CP* 3.7.3.4). It is clearly just such a construction that appears here in the *Precepts*: “[The Pythagoreans] supposed that it was necessary **to strip away** generations that are contrary to nature and also those that arise by violence and **to leave alone** the generations, among those which arise according to nature and with temperance, which arise for temperate and lawful production of children.” The only thing slightly unusual in the construction is that the *Precepts* use the verb καταλιμπάνειν, which has the same meaning as καταλείπειν. Although it is less common than καταλείπειν, there are around ten usages before the end of the fourth century including four in the Hippocratic corpus (e.g., *Mul.* 1.78) and one in Thucydides (8.17), so there is no problem in assuming that Aristoxenus used it rather than καταλείπειν.

There are some significant ambiguities as to what exactly the Pythagoreans are asserting here that arise from ambiguities about the meaning of the word γεννήσεις. Many scholars take it to mean “reproductive sex acts” (Gaca 2003: 100) or “acts of begetting” (Clark 1989) in this passage. The best argument for this interpretation is that the immediately preceding lines in Iamblichus’ discussion have focused on the state of development of the young people who are engaging in sex and in the following lines the focus is again on the condition of those who are engaging in sex (they should not be drunk or over-full of food), so

the emphasis seems to be on the sex act itself and the conditions under which it occurs. The passage thus envisages that we are reviewing the various conditions under which sex can take place and considering under which conditions it ought to be allowed. The Pythagoreans call on us to strip away, in our mind's eye, those that are unnatural or occur with violence and among those that are in accord with nature and that are temperate to leave only (as acceptable) those that arise for temperate and lawful production of children. Thus we are being told not to practice incest or rape and that even sex that is natural and temperate is not appropriate unless it is directed at production of children that is temperate (i.e. does not involve excessive production of children?) and lawful (i.e. that is carried out in marriage?). Since there was a near universal taboo against incest, and rape was not generally approved, it is odd that we have to be explicitly told to eliminate these possibilities. Moreover, just two sentences before this in Iamblichus, we were told that the Pythagoreans praised the traditional prohibition on incest in the Greek communities, so it is repetitive to say again that they did not approve of “unnatural sex.”

Another possibility is to take γεννήσεις not as “reproductive sex acts” but in one of its two other common meanings, “births” or “engenderings.” Such readings produce a radically different interpretation for the passage. In these cases the Pythagoreans would be talking about what to do with conceptions or actual births that were the result of unnatural or violent sex (i.e. incest or rape). They would be arguing that abortions should be undertaken or infants exposed in cases of incest and rape. Indeed, they would be arguing that abortions or exposure should be practiced even in cases where there was no incest or violence but where the child would go beyond the acceptable number of children for a couple or where the couple were not sanctioned by society (e.g., married). Such a reading does away with the redundancy with the preceding sentences and the “stripping away and leaving behind” language does fit the supposition that it is fetuses or actual births that are being considered better than proposed sex acts. There is no exact parallel for the use of περιτρίπειν to refer to abortion or infanticide. However, Philolaus fragment 13 treats the umbilical cord as a root and thus suggests that the embryo was viewed initially as a plant. If the *Pythagorean Precepts* are also working with the conception of the embryo as a plant then the use of περιτρίπειν becomes significant in light of the uses in the botanical treatises of Theophrastus cited above. Abortion may have been viewed as a sort of pruning that produced a better and healthier ultimate offspring (I owe this observation to Eirini Viltanioti).

Some scholars might immediately object to such a reading on the grounds that the Pythagoreans were one of the few groups known to explicitly oppose abortion. This view goes back to Edelstein (1967: 18–20) who argued that the injunction against giving a woman a pessary in order to produce an abortion

in the Hippocratic Oath was Pythagorean in origin and showed that the oath was not an oath generally taken by Hippocratic physicians, who did give abortifacient drugs, but rather limited to doctors of a Pythagorean persuasion. However, Edelstein's evidence for a supposed Pythagorean hostility to abortion is very questionable. It is important to note that there is no text from antiquity that makes any direct assertion about the Pythagoreans' attitude to abortion. Edelstein bases his case on two texts that he argues show that the Pythagoreans thought life to begin at conception and concludes from this that they must have opposed abortion. This inference is in itself questionable, since it assumes that life was in itself sacred, and it is unclear that such an assumption is legitimate for the Pythagoreans (Bellemare 1999: 21–2). However, the bigger problem is that the texts on which he relies to show that the Pythagoreans thought that life began at conception are late, problematic and provide no evidence for early Pythagoreanism.

The *Pythagorean Notes*, excerpted by Alexander Polyhistor in the first century BC and quoted by Diogenes Laertius in the 3rd century AD, report that the human seed is a clot of brain containing hot vapors in it (Diog. Laert. 8.28–9). Soul and sensation are said to originate from this vapor. Edelstein takes this to show that for the Pythagoreans the embryo would have a soul from the beginning and hence should not be aborted (1967: 19). Indeed, if this interpretation were right even human semen ought to have a soul, since it is the seed that is described in this way not the fetus. But there are numerous problems with this interpretation. First, soul and sense are said to come from this vapor and this hardly means that they need have been there at the beginning. The suggestion is rather that they developed at a later date from this original vapor. As far as this point goes then, the Pythagoreans might agree with Aristotle (*Pol.* 1335b19–26) that abortion would only be prohibited after sensation developed in the fetus and not at conception. Second, whatever the exact view we suppose to be expressed in the *Pythagorean Notes*, there is no evidence that such a view goes back to the Pythagoreans of the fifth and fourth centuries. The philosophical system set forth in the *Notes* is almost universally recognized as a pseudo-Pythagorean product of the Hellenistic period (Burkert 1972: 53; Long 2013; Laks 2014). Some scholars have suggested that it preserves elements of earlier Pythagoreanism but, while this is possible, it is simply impossible to determine with any sort of confidence what those early elements are (Laks 2014). In the particular case of the soul and when it is incarnated, some have thought to find a parallel between the *Notes* and the fragments of the fifth-century Pythagorean, Philolaus (Wellmann 1919). However, the similarity between Philolaus and the account of the soul in the *Pythagorean Notes* is limited to their common supposition that the human being develops from the hot in some sense. Philolaus, however, says nothing about the seed being a clot

of brain or about it having hot vapors within it from which sensation develops. Breath does not enter Philolaus' account of human development until birth, when breath is drawn in to cool the heat of the newborn (A27). There is no explicit assertion as to when Philolaus thought the soul entered the human body, but the best hypothesis is that it did so at birth (Huffman 2009: 32). If this is true, then Philolaus is likely to have found abortions unproblematic. The crucial points are that 1) the *Pythagorean Notes* do not clearly assert that life begins at conception or that the Pythagoreans rejected abortion, 2) no clear connection can be established between Philolaus or any other early Pythagorean and the *Pythagorean Notes*.

The second text that Edelstein cites to support the view that the Pythagoreans rejected abortion is even later. According to Edelstein, that the Pythagoreans thought that the embryo was animate from conception “is expressly attested by a writer of the third century A.D.” (1967: 19). The text in question is the treatise *To Gaurus On How Embryos are Ensouled* that is now generally recognized to be by Porphyry (Wilberding 2011). Porphyry presents a view according to which the soul is present at the moment when the semen is ejaculated since the soul is needed to insure that the seed is retained by the womb (34.20 Kalbfleisch 1895). He says that Numenius is a prominent exponent of this view. Numenius is commonly labeled a Neopythagorean but his views are heavily influenced by middle Platonism and have nothing to do with early Pythagoreanism (Dillon 2014). Porphyry then adds that “those who interpret the thought of Pythagoras” (οἱ τὰς Πυθαγόρου ὑπονοίας ἐξηγούμενοι) also have this view. He further identifies these interpreters as those who read references to certain rivers in Plato, Hesiod and the Orphics in an allegorical fashion as indicating “seed.” Thus these interpreters of the thought of Pythagoras know of no explicit evidence that Pythagoras or any other Pythagorean thought that the embryo was animate from conception. They try to derive such a view from allegorical readings, and these are readings not of explicitly Pythagorean texts but of texts by other authors. We do not know who these exegetes of the thought of Pythagoras were for sure, but the most recent editor of the *To Gaurus* provides convincing arguments for his conclusion that “this is probably above all a reference to Longinus” (Wilberding 2011: 57–8). This Longinus was Porphyry's teacher in the third century AD, before Porphyry met Plotinus. So the people to whom this text assigns the view that soul enters at conception, or rather guides conception, are not early Pythagoreans of the fifth and fourth centuries BC but rather Neoplatonists and Neopythagoreans of the third century AD. Moreover, insofar as the text suggests an origin for the view of these later thinkers, it is not explicit early Pythagorean teaching, but rather allegorical interpretation of Plato, Hesiod and Pherecydes. So this passage of the *To Gaurus* is virtually worthless for determining what Pythagoreans of the fourth century BC thought and it certainly

does not “expressly attest” that the early Pythagoreans had this or any other view about when the fetus first gains a soul.

The evidence cited by Edelstein thus indicates that some Neoplatonists and Neopythagoreans of the third century AD thought that the soul was present at the moment of ejaculation in order to oversee conception, but tells us nothing about what Pythagoreans 500–600 years earlier in the fifth- and fourth-century BC thought. We simply have no direct evidence as to what the early Pythagoreans thought on this issue, although as mentioned above, the most likely hypothesis is that Philolaus did not think that the soul entered the body until birth and hence would have been unlikely to have had any objections to abortion (Huffman 2009: 32). Thus, there is no external evidence that would lead us to reject the suggestion that lines 146–9 of fragment 9 are referring to abortion. As suggested above, the lines make best sense in their immediate context if we suppose that they refer to abortion: the text asserts first that the Pythagoreans approve of the customary prohibition of incest in the Greek world and then that they thought that fetuses arising from incest and rape as well should be aborted. Such a view of abortion, in fact, fits very well with the Pythagorean position that the nature of the fetus is heavily influenced by the conditions under which it is conceived. Lines 156–8 explicitly assert that when the man’s temperament is base, disordered or discordant the seed that he produces will be unsound. The temperaments that lead to unsound seed include those of the drunkard and glutton but would certainly include the even more disturbed temperaments of the rapist and incestuous lover. The unsound seed of these disturbed temperaments will inevitably lead to a fetus that is defective in important ways and that should therefore be aborted. Of course, the Pythagoreans clearly believe that intercourse should not occur under these conditions in the first place, since all people should engage in sex rarely and only under the best of conditions. Thus, the Pythagorean ideal would be for there to be few, if any, abortions. However, if conception does take place as the result of rape or incest or even as the result of drunken carousing, abortion is appropriate, since the fetus will inevitably be unsound.

In accepting abortions in some cases the Pythagoreans are in agreement with both Plato and Aristotle, but there appear to be some differences regarding the cases in which each of these philosophers call for abortion or infanticide. In the *Politics* (1335b19–25) Aristotle argues that infanticide should be practiced if the child is born deformed, but recognizes that many people will not accept the infanticide of healthy children simply for purposes of population control. He argues that abortion can be used to limit the number of children in accordance with state guidelines, but such abortions should occur before the fetus attains sensation and life. He does not precisely define when the fetus gains sensation and life but he may think that the crucial point is the formation of the sense organs, since they must be present in order for the fetus to have the capacity for

reason (Kraut 1997: 154–6). In this passage of the *Precepts*, the Pythagoreans do not make clear whether they are talking about abortions or infanticides and there is no discussion of when in a pregnancy an abortion could occur. The Pythagoreans, like Aristotle, are concerned that fetuses that are in some sense deformed should not be raised. However, Aristotle gives the impression that he is talking about severely deformed fetuses, whereas the Pythagoreans seem to countenance abortion of fetuses that might appear normal physically but have an internal constitution that is deformed because of the disordered condition of the parents at conception. On the other hand, the Pythagoreans say nothing directly about abortion or infanticide for simple population control as Aristotle does, although the reference to “temperate production of children” may conceal such a reference. Moreover, there is no hint in the *Precepts* that the state is setting any guidelines about abortion or infanticide. The recommendations of the *Precepts* seem to be advice to individuals rather than mandates from the state.

In the *Republic* Plato agrees with the Pythagoreans that children should only be born from those in the best condition, at their prime (ἀκμαζόντων) as Plato puts it (460d–e), and says that while parents who are past their prime may have sex, they should abort any pregnancies that occur or expose any child born, if the pregnancy is allowed to come to term (461c). But Plato’s use of abortion and infanticide probably goes beyond this. He says that the offspring of superior parents will be raised at the public nursery but those of inferior parents and any of the offspring of superior parents that are born defective, “they will hide away in secret without speaking of it” (460c). This is surely a reference to infanticide. Finally, it would appear that any children born to women who are too young or born to parents who are in their prime but whose union is not sanctioned by the state will also be aborted or exposed, although Plato does not say so explicitly (461b). Thus, in the *Republic* it would appear that among the guardians, at least, only the children of couples who have been sanctioned by the state and who produce children in their prime and that are not born defective will be raised. It is less clear if similar eugenic principles are to be followed in other groups in the state besides the guardians. Later in his life, in the *Laws* (740e), Plato does not explicitly mention abortion and infanticide as means to control population, although he does not rule them out, and suggests the time-tested practice of sending the excess population away to found a colony.

If lines 146–9 are referring to abortion and infanticide, the Pythagoreans have a general outlook that is the same as Plato’s, i.e. that only the children of parents who are fully developed and in good condition should be raised. There are, however, significant differences in emphasis. The Pythagoreans say nothing about a class of guardians or about an ideal state. Their use of the analogy with rearing animals such as dogs and birds suggests that they think that it is important to make sure that couples are compatible in some way and that

parents pick the right mate for their child, but there is no hint of the elaborate eugenics program outlined by Plato in the *Republic*. The Pythagoreans specify incest and rape as cases where abortion or infanticide should be practiced, whereas Plato would probably agree but does not pick out these cases. When the Pythagoreans talk about eliminating procreations that arise with *hubris*, in addition to rape they probably mean to include any procreation that involves excess, so that all generation from ill-considered sex, including sex when drunk, should be eliminated. Finally, even if the sex is carried out in a temperate fashion, any children that result should only be raised if two further conditions are satisfied: the child production must be moderate (τεκνοποιεῖν σώφρονι), i.e. an excessive number of children must not be produced, and the sex must be lawful (νομίμω), i.e. within marriage. Plato seems to envisage that there will inevitably be sex that is contrary to the rules and even seems to condone it among those past their prime (461b–c), although he says that any children that result should not be raised. The Pythagoreans may think that some temperate sex outside marriage is acceptable but clearly also think that there should be as little sex as possible and would presumably hope to limit abortions and infanticides by limiting sex.

As noted above, it is impossible to be sure that the Pythagoreans are referring to abortions and infanticide in lines 146–9 rather than just eliminating certain sorts of sex. However, the assertion that procreation that is haphazard and without plan is “the most powerful and clearest cause of vice and badness among human beings,” strongly suggests that they would have accepted abortion and infanticide. For, even if we read lines 146–9 as ruling out certain sorts of sex, the question would still arise as to what should happen if sex does take place under inappropriate conditions and conception occurs. The Pythagoreans clearly believe that a child conceived in such conditions is likely to be prone to vice. If there were a clear principle valuing human life as such, then such a child would need to be raised and its parents and society should do the best they can for it. However, there is no indication that the Pythagoreans valued life *per se*. It thus becomes very unclear why they would allow a pregnancy that is likely to lead to a child prone to vice to continue.

Line 146 – τὰς τε παρὰ φύσιν γεννήσεις: Edelstein thought that “generations contrary to nature” was a reference to homosexual sex and argued that this passage showed that the Pythagoreans were the only ancient philosophers totally to condemn it (1967: 35). It is true that the phrase “contrary to nature” (παρὰ φύσιν) was used by Plato in the *Laws* (841d) with reference to homosexual sex, where he refers to “sowing barren seed in males contrary to nature” (σπέρματα . . . στείρειν . . . ἄγονα ἀρρένων παρὰ φύσιν). However, the context in the *Precepts* is different and rules out the supposition that the reference is to homosexual sex. The *Precepts* refer to “generations” (γεννήσεις) contrary to nature and, of course,

generation is precisely what homosexual sex does not produce. The passage in Plato makes exactly this point by saying that the sowing of seed “contrary to nature” is “barren,” i.e. that it literally does not produce generation (ἄγονα). One might try to argue that since in some cases γεννήσεις comes to mean “reproductive sex acts” (see on 146–7 above) the term might be used sloppily just to mean “sex,” but by far the most common uses of the word mean “births” or “engenderings” so it is unlikely that the reproductive connotations are ever lacking. Moreover, the focus here in the *Precepts* is on reproduction rather than sex *per se*. The precocious are not to engage in sex because of the inferior quality of the seed and fruit produced by the young (lines 124–9). Those producing children need to take great forethought of their future offspring (lines 149–50). Nor is there any other hint of discussion of homosexual sex in these lines.

“Generations contrary to nature” is instead a reference to incest, which has been mentioned just three lines before (142–3). It does not appear that incest is elsewhere described as “contrary to nature” using the phrase παρὰ φύσιν. However, there is little doubt that the Greeks did regard it as contrary to nature. As noted above, Xenophon identifies the ban on incest as a prime example of an unwritten law (*Mem.* 4.4.20), and Demosthenes associates unwritten laws with what nature herself decrees (ἡ φύσις αὐτὴ τοῖς ἀγράφοις νομίμοις . . . διώρικεν – *De Corona* 275). Moreover, the pseudo-Pythagorean Hipparchus does explicitly identify desires which cause us not to refrain “from the unholy pleasures derived from daughters or mothers,” i.e. incestuous desires, as desires that are “contrary to nature” (τὰς παρὰ φύσιν . . . ἐπιθυμίας – Thesleff 1965: 89.19–21).

Since the Pythagoreans do not appeal to the “unnaturalness” of incest in their argument against it in lines 140–5 above, they may be applying the label here out of respect for conventional Greek attitudes. The point may be that anyone who goes against such a deeply ingrained custom as the prohibition on incest (so deeply ingrained that incest was regarded as “unnatural”), would be displaying exactly the sort of hubris that the Pythagoreans avoid at all costs.

Line 147 – μεθ’ ὕβρεως: This phrase appears three times elsewhere in the fourth century. It appears in the *Magna Moralia* (1202b28–9) and is used by Plato twice in the *Laws* (716a7, 793e7) to refer to the young who act “in excess” and to punishments that are “degrading.” A hubristic act typically involves both excess and an attempt to assault status (see the commentary on fr. 8). Here in the *Precepts* μεθ’ ὕβρεως is thus used to refer to generations that arise through an act that assaults the status of the woman as protected by society and that involves excess. Clearly the primary reference must be to rape, which is often described as an act of hubris. Thus, Dinarchus (1.23) reports that the Athenians sentenced Themistius of Aphidna to death because he raped the Rhodian lyre player (τὴν Ῥοδίαν κιθαρίστριαν ὕβρισεν) at the Eleusinian festival (see Cohen 1991: 178 for

further examples). However, seductions were also acts of hubris (Cohen 1991: 178) and it may be that the Pythagoreans would have included them as well. Indeed, since generations μεθ' ὕβρεως are contrasted with generations μετὰ σωφροσύνης (with temperance, line 148), it might be that generations μεθ' ὕβρεως include a whole range of intemperate generations, from rape, to seduction, to intercourse when drunk or gorged with food (which is mentioned explicitly in lines 153–6).

Line 147 – καταλιμπάνειν: See on lines 146–7 above.

Lines 148–9 – τεκνοποιία σώφρονί τε καὶ νομίμῳ: This noun appears four times in Xenophon (e.g., *Lac.* 1.3) and about twenty times in Aristotle, although never in Plato. It appears three times in this passage of Iamblichus (here and in lines 152 and 175). Elsewhere in Iamblichus it only appears in the Pythagorean *acusma* that says that one should never have intercourse for the purpose of producing children with a woman who is wearing gold (VP 84.4).

These two adjectives are both common in the fifth and fourth centuries. Surprisingly, they are not common in combination at any period. Plato connects what is lawful (νόμιμος) with temperance (σωφροσύνη) in one passage (*Grg.* 504d), but the first pairing of the two adjectives is in Plutarch (*Moralia* 329f). They appear together nowhere else in Iamblichus.

Line 149 – ὑπελάμβανον δὲ δεῖν: This phrase is very characteristic of the style of the *Precepts* and indicates that Iamblichus is continuing to draw on them. The *Precepts* use δεῖν frequently (e.g., fr. 2 and fr. 4 from Stobaeus) and ὑπελάμβανον appears to have been a common introductory verb (see the note on line 145 above).

Lines 149–51 – πολλήν πρόνοιαν ποιεῖσθαι . . . τῶν ἰσομένων ἐγγόνων: This form of expression finds several parallels in the fourth century. Isocrates (8.93) talks of “those who exercise great forethought” (τῶν πολλήν πρόνοιαν ποιοιμένων). Aeschines (*On the False Embassy* 179) similarly urges his listener “to take great forethought” (πολλήν πρόνοιαν ποιήσασθαι). Both of these authors use ὑπὲρ + the genitive to indicate the object of the forethought but other fourth-century authors (e.g., Dem. 21.97) use just the genitive as is done here in the *Precepts*. The expression appears once elsewhere in Iamblichus (VP 53).

Line 150 – τοὺς τεκνοποιουμένους: This verb, like the cognate noun (see line 148 above) is fairly common in the fourth century, particularly in Xenophon, who uses it nine times (e.g., *Mem.* 4.4.22.4). The only other place the verb appears in Iamblichus is in his report of the Pythagorean *acusma*: “one must beget children” (δεῖ τεκνοποιεῖσθαι – VP 83 and 86). The cognate noun was also used in an *acusma* (see on line 148 above). Many of the *acusmata* are likely to go

back to the time of Pythagoras himself, so it is likely that the early Pythagoreans did use this verb and its related noun.

Line 152 – **προσάγειν αὐτόν**: In the earliest use of this verb with the reflexive pronoun, Theophrastus *Char.* 25.2.6, the reflexive is indirect. The first clear parallels for the use of the true reflexive, with the meaning “bring oneself to” or “set oneself to,” are found in Philo (*De spec. leg.* 1254.1) and Plutarch (*Moralia* 812e4). There is, however, no difficulty in supposing that such a use was possible already in the fourth century.

Lines 152–3 – **σωφρόνως τε καὶ ὑγεινῶς**: This pair of adverbs is not common at any time. It appears first in Plato (*Resp.* 571d7).

Line 153 – **βεβιωκότα τε καὶ ζῶντα**: There appears to be no precise parallel for the pairing of the perfect with the present of these two verbs, although βιώω does regularly supply the perfect and aorist of ζάω (LSJ s.v.).

Lines 153–6 – **μήτε πληρώσει χρώμενον τροφῆς ἀκαίρως μήτε προσφερόμενον τοιαῦτα ἀφ’ ὧν χείρους αἱ τῶν σωμάτων ἔξεις γίνονται, μήτε δὴ μεθύοντά γε, ἀλλ’ ἥκιστα πάντων**: Lines 140–153 have been an insertion into the text of the *Precepts* as found in fragment 4, derived from Stobaeus. This insertion is likely to be an excerpt or excerpts from elsewhere in the *Precepts* as the commentary above shows. Here in lines 153–6, Iamblichus or his source returns to the sequence of text as found in fragment 4 but, in order to make what is said at the end of fragment 4 of the *Precepts* cohere with the inserted excerpts, Iamblichus considerably rewrites the original text of the *Precepts* as found there. Nonetheless, it is clear that Iamblichus is here relying on the text as found in fragment 4, both because his μήτε πληρώσει χρώμενον τροφῆς . . . μεθύοντά recalls so closely fragment 4’s μήτε τροφῆς μήτε μέθης πλήρη and also because the words that follow shortly thereafter, ἐκ φαύλης τε καὶ ἀσυμφώνου καὶ ταραχώδους κράσεως, are identical to what is found in fragment 4. This means that most of the rest of the text of lines 153–6 derives from Iamblichus or his source and not the *Precepts*, i.e. χρώμενον . . . ἀκαίρως μήτε προσφερόμενον τοιαῦτα ἀφ’ ὧν χείρους αἱ τῶν σωμάτων ἔξεις γίνονται . . . γε, ἀλλ’ ἥκιστα πάντων. Nothing in this language is impossible for the fourth century (πλήρωσις is common in Plato, particularly in the *Philebus*; ἀκαίρως occurs frequently in the Hippocratic corpus; ἥκιστα πάντων appears in Aristophanes). Isocrates already has αἱ τῶν σωμάτων ἔξεις (15.185.4), but it is also true that Iamblichus uses precisely the phrase ἔξεις τῶν σωμάτων twice in the *De Mysteriis* (1.8.18; 5.18.23).

Line 155 – **μήτε**: The standard editions of Iamblichus have followed Cobet’s emendation μήτι for the manuscripts’ μήτε. The combination μήτι . . . γε meaning “let alone” or “much less” would certainly make good sense here. Moreover,

this combination is common in later Greek and particularly in Galen (e.g., *De plac. Hipp. Plat.* 6.3.36.3). LSJ cites a parallel from Philodemus for the precise sequence of particles here μήτι δὴ γε. Despite this support for the emendation I have chosen to keep the manuscript text because 1) it is entirely unobjectionable in meaning, 2) I have not been able to find any parallel for μήτι used after a preceding μήτε.

Line 156 – ῥοντο: It is likely that Iamblichus here preserves the correct text of the *Precepts* rather than Stobaeus' οἶεται. Both the past tense and the plural verb are more characteristic of the *Precepts* than what is found in Stobaeus. See the commentary on fragment 4, lines 1 and 15.

Lines 157–8 – μοχθηρά γίνεσθαι τὰ σπέρματα: Iamblichus has replaced the much more elaborate phrase, which Stobaeus shows to have been the text of the *Precepts* (οὐ . . . εὔρυθμα καὶ καλὰ, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἀγαθὰ τὴν ἀρχὴν), with the single adjective, μοχθηρά, “in bad condition.” This adjective occurs elsewhere in Iamblichus only in the *Protrepticus*, where it is not clear whether it is Iamblichus' word or that of his source. It is a very common word in fifth- and fourth-century Greek. The adjective is found in the parallel passage in Ocellus, so it is likely that it was introduced into the text by Iamblichus' source rather than Iamblichus himself. What are said to be “in bad condition” or “unsound” here in Iamblichus are explicitly the seeds. The original text of the *Precepts* simply used neuter plural adjectives to say that what arose from “a mixing that is base and discordant and disordered” were not “well-proportioned and beautiful things . . . but things that are not good at all.” It seems clear, however, that Iamblichus' interpretation is right and that the point that the *Precepts* are making is that the quality of the seed depends on the nature of the mixture of the elements in the body of the father (see the commentary on fr. 4, lines 15–16).

Lines 160–76: Since fragment 4, which Stobaeus explicitly identifies as from the *Pythagorean Precepts*, ends with the material paraphrased by Iamblichus in lines 153–8, we cannot know for sure whether the next unit of text in Iamblichus, lines 160–76, comes from the *Precepts* or not. That these lines are derived from the *Precepts* is strongly suggested not only by the continuity in subject matter but also by the use of καθόλου δέ here at the beginning of the section, since this phrase is very characteristic of the *Precepts*. See the commentary on line 12 above and the discussion of the style of the *Precepts* in the Introduction. Moreover fragment 2, line 1, which Stobaeus identifies as from the *Precepts*, begins not just with καθόλου δέ, but also with καθόλου δέ ῥοντο as here in line 160. It is totally characteristic of the *Precepts* to report what the Pythagoreans said with a third person verb in the imperfect with no expressed subject as here. In addition to appearing here and in fragment 2, ῥοντο is used in this way in fragment 8, line

16, fragment 11, line 13, and here in fragment 9 in lines 125 and 156 above (cf. subsidiary precept 1). Thus, these introductory words here in line 160 make it all but certain that what follows was derived from the *Precepts*. If this conclusion is accepted, then it seems plausible that καθόλου δε here in line 160 corresponds to καθόλου μὲν in lines 124–5. These two phrases thus mark two main divisions in the general treatment of the generation of children, which is announced as a topic in line 124. The first section of text concentrates on making the point that the precocious should be avoided in childbearing, so that young people who are not fully developed should not be procreating. The text as preserved in Stobaeus suggests that this section ended with other restrictions on the condition of the would-be parents besides their age, e.g., that they not be drunk. The second section then makes the more general point that parents-to-be should give considerable forethought to the conditions under which they procreate and afterwards to the rearing of their children. Into the first section Iamblichus then evidently introduced passages from elsewhere in the *Precepts* that discussed other desirable restrictions on procreation (lines 140–53).

The agreement of the parallel passage in “Ocellus” 57 with Iamblichus 160–176 in general content also strongly suggests that these lines ultimately derive from the *Precepts*. Iamblichus and “Ocellus” have been largely in agreement throughout lines 124–58 where Stobaeus also preserves some of the text of Aristoxenus, so that it is clear that “Ocellus” and Iamblichus drew on a common source, which was a slightly revised and expanded version of Aristoxenus (see the Introduction). When they continue to agree in lines 160–76, after the excerpt in Stobaeus has broken off but where the same subject matter and train of thought continue, surely it is likely that they are continuing to follow this same common source. “Ocellus” and Iamblichus agree in general content throughout these lines and in some cases the wording is identical, but there are larger differences in structure and in vocabulary than in lines 124–58, so that it is clear that Iamblichus and “Ocellus” intervened in the text a little more than in the earlier section. We can thus be confident that the general content corresponds closely to what Aristoxenus wrote but should recognize that the exact wording is likely to differ here somewhat more than in other cases from what Aristoxenus wrote. In the notes below I identify some of the passages that are most likely to be insertions by Iamblichus.

Line 160 – καθόλου δε παντελῶς ὧντο: παντελῶς is used frequently by Iamblichus in the *De Mysteriis* but it is also common in Aristoxenus’ works on harmonics and rhythemics.

Line 160–1 – ῥαθύμου τινὸς εἶναι καὶ ἀπροσκέπτου: This pair of adjectives is found nowhere else. This is undoubtedly primarily because the second adjective is quite rare, appearing only around ten times in Greek even including the

adverbial form. Nonetheless both a passive and active use of the adjective are found already in the fourth century (“improvident” Dem. 51.15 and “unforeseen” Xen. *Lac.* 13.7). The first adjective, “frivolous,” is quite common in the fifth and fourth centuries in drama, the orators and the philosophers, but this is the only time it appears in Aristoxenus and it is only found once elsewhere in Iamblichus.

Line 161 – ζῳοποιεῖν: This verb appears only here in Aristoxenus or in Iamblichus. It does, however, appear twice in Aristotle (e.g., *GA* 730a2) and five times in Theophrastus (e.g., *CP* 3.22) in the fourth century with the meaning “propagate” or “engender animals.” So it makes sense as a word that Aristoxenus or the Pythagoreans might have used in the fourth century.

Lines 161–2 – ἀγειν τινὰ εἰς γένεσιν τε καὶ οὐσίαν: Although the expression εἰς γένεσιν τε καὶ οὐσίαν has no precise parallel elsewhere, it is reminiscent of a number of passages in Plato and Aristotle and later authors dependent on them. Thus at *Resp.* 359a5 Plato refers to the “genesis and essential nature of justice” (γένεσιν τε καὶ οὐσίαν δικαιοσύνης tr. Shorey). In the *Philebus*, Plato makes the point that generation is for the sake of being rather than the reverse (54a–c) and Aristotle repeats the point (ἡ γὰρ γένεσις ἔνεκα τῆς οὐσίας ἐστίν, ἀλλ’ οὐχ ἡ οὐσία ἔνεκα τῆς γενέσεως *PA* 640a18). Again in the *Philebus* (26d8), Plato refers to a generation into being (γένεσιν εἰς οὐσίαν – see also Arist. *Top.* 139b20). In the *Sophist* (219b5), Plato talks of someone leading something into being (εἰς οὐσίαν ἀγῆ) and says that such a person makes something. In the Platonic *Definitions* (411a5) genesis is defined as a movement into being (γένεσις κίνησις εἰς οὐσίαν). Thus, to describe procreation in terms of someone “leading someone into generation and being” does have a distinctly Platonic ring to it. If describing a parent as “leading someone to come to be and exist” were language paralleled in prose authors outside philosophy, such as the orators, then it might be that there was no necessary connection to Plato and Aristotle, but these expressions are not found in the orators and are precisely characteristic of Plato and Aristotle. A distinction between generation and being of course goes back to Parmenides, so it is not impossible that Pythagoreans of the fourth century employed it. Nonetheless, while the immediately preceding ζῳοποιεῖν is not a technical term and raises no problems, there is at least the suspicion that someone, whether Aristoxenus or Iamblichus, has added this Platonic/Aristotelian formulation. There are not many obvious Platonic formulations in the fragments of the *Precepts* preserved by Stobaeus that are likely to reflect accurately Aristoxenus’ style so it seems most likely that Iamblichus or his source is responsible for these words and I have accordingly bracketed them. This conclusion is also supported by the fact that no parallel to the bracketed words is found in the parallel passage in Ocellus 57.

Line 162 – **μετὰ πάσης σπουδῆς**: This exact phrase is not found first until Diodorus Siculus (13.54.7.1). The simpler phrase μετὰ σπουδῆς is, however, found relatively frequently in the fourth century in both philosophical authors (Plato and Aristotle) and in historians (Xenophon) and orators (e.g., Isocrates, Demosthenes, Aeschines). There is thus no reason to suppose that Aristoxenus or the Pythagoreans could not have used the full phrase. Plato already has the similar μετὰ πολλῆς σπουδῆς, “with great effort” (*Chrm.* 175e) as does Isocrates (12.135.5 “with great seriousness”), who also uses μετὰ πλείστης σπουδῆς (“with greatest earnestness” 5.129.7). The simple phrase can mean either “in haste,” “with effort,” or “in earnest,” as opposed to “in play” (Xen. *Symp.* 1.1; Pl. *Leg.* 887d). Haste is not an issue here in the *Precepts*; the Pythagoreans mean that the person who is going to beget children should proceed “with every effort” or “in all seriousness.” The meaning of these two options is very similar, but the latter is probably slightly better, since the point is that the procreation of children should not take place frivolously (see ῥαθύμου in line 160). Iamblichus uses neither the full phrase nor the simpler phrase anywhere else except here and in the following lines.

Line 163 – **προορᾶν**: This is a common verb in the fifth and fourth centuries. There are parallels for its construction with ὅπως as here, see Demosthenes 19.272. 1; 19.285.6. However, parts of the ὅπως clause (εἰς τὸ εἶναι τε καὶ ζῆν – see on lines 163–4 below) seem almost certain to be additions by Iamblichus and those parts are so integral to the clause that the whole clause should be taken to be an insertion by Iamblichus. In the original text of the *Precepts* προορᾶν would then have been used absolutely as “take forethought.” Herodotus (9.79) provides a parallel for such an absolute use in describing Pausanias thanking Lampon for his good will and forethought (τὸ μὲν εὐνοεῖν τε καὶ προορᾶν).

Line 163 – **ὥς χαριστάτη**: There seems to be no parallel for the use of ὥς with the superlative of this adjective. The adjective appears nowhere else in Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, but the adjective and related adverb appear once each elsewhere in Iamblichus, in both cases in the *Protrepticus*. The adjective itself is quite common and is found already in Homer but its exact nuance is often a bit elusive. As applied to people it often means “accomplished” or “elegant” (LSJ s.v.). In this case Iamblichus, in composing this inserted clause, is probably looking forward to the reference to dog breeders and their expertise in making sure that puppies are conceived under the best possible conditions. Accordingly he says that parents should be concerned that children arrive in the world in “as accomplished” or “as fine a manner as possible.”

Lines 163–4 – **ἡ εἰς τὸ εἶναι τε καὶ ζῆν ἄφρις**: The word ἀφρις appears already in Herodotus, but the expression εἰς τὸ εἶναι is found only in technical philosophical

texts starting in the fourth century. It first appears in the Platonic *Definitions* where γένεσις is defined as πόρευσις εἰς τὸ εἶναι. Aristotle uses the expression four times (e.g., *GA* 778b28). It becomes much more common in later authors such as Philo. Moreover, the exact phrase εἰς τὸ εἶναι τε καὶ ζῆν finds its only parallel in Alexander (*de An.* 105.23). It thus seems very likely that Iamblichus or his source is intervening in the text here again. Iamblichus also uses εἰς τὸ εἶναι in *On General Mathematical Science* (50.6). That ἡ εἰς τὸ εἶναι τε καὶ ζῆν ἀφίξις is missing in the parallel passage in Ocellus 57 also suggests that it is an insertion by Iamblichus.

Line 164 – φιλόκυνας: Apart from this passage and the parallel passage in Ocellus this word appears in only two other places in Greek: in Plato (*Ly.* 212d) and in one of the commentators on Aristotle (Aspasius, in *EN* 116.32). It does appear two times in Herodotus as a proper name (9.71; 9.85).

Line 165 – σκυλακείας: This word meaning “the rearing of puppies” only appears in four other passages in Greek. It is used twice by Arrian in his *Cynegetica* when discussing the right time for “breeding puppies” (preface 1.43; 29.1.1). It also appears in Plutarch (*Cat. Ma.* 5.2.8) and Pollux’s *Onomasticon* (5.51.2). Since the word is rare even in later texts, its failure to appear earlier is not good evidence for concluding that it was not available in the fourth century.

Lines 165–6 – ἐξ ὧν δεῖ καὶ ὅτε δεῖ καὶ ὥς δεῖ διακειμένων: At first sight these expressions with δεῖ may appear Aristotelian, but they in fact occur in a wide range of Greek authors including such authors as Demosthenes. Such expressions are, moreover, very much in accord with the overall style of the *Precepts*, which uses δεῖν prominently, and also appear in fragment 3, lines 10–11. See further the commentary there. None of these three specific expressions suggest that this passage of the *Precepts* was modeled on Aristotle. Aristotle does use ὥς δεῖ (although not ὥς δεῖ διακειμένων) prominently in passages stating the doctrine of the mean (e.g., *EN* 1106b22), but this expression is used extremely widely throughout fourth-century authors (six times in Isocrates [e.g. 15.255], nine times in Demosthenes, thirteen times in the Hippocratic corpus, twenty-four times in Xenophon, twenty-one times in Plato). The expression ἐξ ὧν δεῖ appears only four times elsewhere. It is used once by Aristotle (*Rh.* 1396b30) but not as part of his doctrine of the mean, and it is used once by Demosthenes (*Exordia* 18.1.1). For ὅτε δεῖ see the commentary on fragment 3, lines 10–11.

Line 166 – σκυλάκια: This word for “puppy” is fairly common in the fourth century, appearing three times in Xenophon, once in Plato, eight times in the Hippocratic corpus and six times in Aristotle. This is the only time it appears in Iamblichus. It may be worth noting that Pythagorean interest in the breeding of

puppies and other animals could be connected to the doctrine of reincarnation and that Pythagoras famously pitied a puppy which was being beaten, in Xenophanes' satirical presentation (fr. 7).

Line 166 – προσηνῆ: This adjective is often translated as “soft” or when applied to persons as “gentle” (LSJ s.v.), but its meaning can be quite elusive. It occurs first in Pindar where it refers to a drink that is “soothing” (P. 352) and to hospitality, where it seems to mean something like “comforting” (P. 10.65). It occurs once each in Herodotus and Thucydides and some fifteen times in the Hippocratic corpus so it clearly was used in prose as well as poetry. It never appears in Plato or the orators and is used only once in the Aristotelian corpus. In Herodotus it is used to describe the liquid derived from a fruit as no less “suitable” for (use in) a lamp than oil (2.94.10). This sense of what is suitable seems to lie behind a number of uses. Thus in Thucydides (6.77.2.6) the Athenians are described as leading some Sicilian cities to ruin but saying something προσηνές to each one. Here the meaning seems more than “soothing” or “comforting” and to emphasize that the quality in question varies with the city to which the words are addressed, i.e. is suitable to each, so that the Loeb translation “alluring” works very well. This seems to be the sense in a fragment of Menander (584) which advises that a man about to marry should make his choice of a wife on two grounds, whether she is good in character and προσηνῆ γ’ ὄψιν, where again soothing or comfortable or gentle is not right but once again something like “alluring” or “winning” would work and where γε suggests that the point is not that the woman be objectively beautiful but “at least suitable” in looks for the specific man involved. The most relevant parallel to this passage of the *Precepts* is from the *Physiognomonica* ascribed to Aristotle (809a31) where the author says that of animals that we undertake to breed, the females are προσηνέστερα καὶ μαλακώτερα than the males. The second adjective here means “gentler” so that προσηνέστερα seems to be something slightly different such as “tamer” or “more amenable” to training, where the idea of suitability for a purpose is involved. Here in the *Precepts* “gentle” (Dillon and Hershbell 1991) does not seem to be the right translation either, since it is not clear that gentleness *per se* is the goal in raising dogs. “Good-tempered” (Clark 1989) is better but “tamer” or “of suitable temperament” would accord better with the overall usage of the adjective.

Line 167 – φιλόρνηθας: This adjective, “fond of birds,” appears only five times in Greek outside of this passage. The earliest is in Aeschylus (*Eu.* 23), although there it is used passively of a cave that is “beloved of birds.” It appears in the third century in both Chrysippus and Phylarchus. It appears nowhere else in Iamblichus. The related noun φιλορνηθία is used by Aristophanes (*Av.* 1300).

Lines 167–8 – τῶν ἐσπουδακώτων περὶ τὰ γενναῖα τῶν ζώων: The use of the perfect participle of σπουδάζω with the preposition περὶ and the accusative case to describe people who are seriously devoted to something is found several times in Plato (e.g., *Leg.* 870d6, τῶν ἐν ταῖς τελεταῖς περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐσπουδακώτων). Aristoxenus uses the construction in his *Life of Archytas* to describe a certain Polyarchus as “seriously devoted to bodily pleasures” (fr. 50, περὶ τὰς σωματικὰς ἡδονὰς ἐσπουδακώτα). The word γενναῖος is common in both poetry and prose in the fifth and fourth centuries referring either to a highborn person or to well-bred animals. Thus, Xenophon compares someone to a “well-bred hound” (*Cyr.* 1.4.15). In the *Laws* (735b5) Plato says that those who keep animals of any sort start by separating out those in good health from those not and the well bred from the ill bred (διαλέξας δὲ τὰ τε ὑγιῆ καὶ τὰ μὴ καὶ τὰ γενναῖα καὶ ἀγεννῆ).

Lines 168–9 – πᾶσαν ποιεῖσθαι σπουδῇν: This is the third time in eight lines that Aristoxenus uses the expression “all seriousness” (see on line 162 above). The construction with ποιέω, which is used here, is paralleled in Herodotus (5.30.19) and Isocrates (5.45.5).

Line 169 – περὶ τοῦ μὴ εἰκῇ γίνεσθαι τὰς γεννήσεις αὐτῶν: Philosophical concern about not acting εἰκῇ (“without plan,” “haphazardly”) goes back to Heraclitus, fragment 47 μὴ εἰκῇ περὶ τῶν μεγίστων συμβαλλώμεθα. The concept of acting εἰκῇ appears in the next lines and in other fragments of the *Precepts* (see the next note). For γεννήσεις see the commentary on fragment 4, line 1.

Lines 171 – εἰκῇ τε καὶ ὥς ἔτυχε: There is only one parallel for this exact phrase. A pseudo-Pythagorean text by Diotogenes (Thesleff 1965: 77.6) uses it in Doric (εἰκᾶ τε καὶ ὥς ἔτυχεν), but instead of ending at ὥς ἔτυχε it adds the phrase ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτομάτου, so that the parallel is not precise. However, some combination of εἰκῇ and ὥς ἔτυχε (most commonly εἰκῇ καὶ ὥς ἔτυχε) appears about fifteen times in Greek before Iamblichus. The combination seems to be late, however, since the earliest use is in Chrysippus (*SVF* 2. 1009): οὐδὲν γὰρ τῶν καλῶν εἰκῇ καὶ ὥς ἔτυχε γίνεται. The phrase is by no means limited to philosophical texts; Diodorus (11.86.3.4), for example, refers to people added to citizenship rolls “without plan and in a haphazard fashion” (εἰκῇ καὶ ὥς ἔτυχε). Of the two parts of the expression, εἰκῇ is used early in Greek (see the previous note), while ὥς ἔτυχε appears first in this sense in the Aristotelian corpus (e.g., *Cael.* 290a31 “nature does nothing haphazardly”) and becomes progressively more common with the passage of time. Aristoxenus does use ὥς ἔτυχε once in the *Harmonics* (41.7), of the voice as having a natural way of moving and not placing intervals “haphazardly.” The term εἰκῇ (“without plan”) appears not only in the Pythagorean

discussion of luck in fragment 7, line 6 but also in the *Precepts*' discussion of friendship in fragment 11, lines 32 and 34, where the Pythagoreans advise that friendships not arise “without plan.” Thus the usage of εἰκῇ here in fragment 9, line 171 is indeed likely to be original to the *Precepts* and not a later addition.

Line 171 – σχεδιάζοντας πάντα τρόπον: The simple verb σχεδιάζω appears first in the fourth century and is rare, before becoming relatively common in later Greek. Apart from this appearance in the *Precepts* it is found only in the pseudo-Platonic *Sisyphus* (387e) and in the comic writer Anaxandrides among fourth-century authors. On the other hand, the compound αὐτοσχεδιάζω appears already in the fifth century in Thucydides and in numerous fourth-century authors such as Xenophon, Isocrates, Plato and Aristotle but becomes less common than the simple form in later Greek. Thucydides uses it positively of Themistocles' “extemporizing” (1.138) but usually it has a negative sense of “act unadvisedly” or “act offhand” (e.g., Pl. *Ap.* 20c) and that seems to be the meaning of the simple verb here in the *Precepts*. It could be that the simple verb has replaced the compound in the transmission of the text, since the simple verb becomes more common later on, but it is not impossible that Aristoxenus or the Pythagoreans already used the rare simple verb in the fourth century. Aristoxenus does use the expression πάντα τρόπον on three occasions in the *Harmonics* (46.3; 46.15; 47.16) and once in the *Rhythmics* (fr. 8).

Line 172 – τρέφειν τε καὶ παιδεύειν: These verbs are commonly paired (“to rear and educate”) in the fourth century (e.g., Isoc. 8.92.7; Dem. 59.18; Pl. *Resp.* 534d3).

Line 172 – μετὰ πάσης ὀλιγωρίας: This exact phrase is unparalleled and even the combination of ὀλιγωρία and πᾶς only finds one parallel (Plut. *Luc.* 34.1.3). However, the combination is clearly influenced by the use of μετὰ πάσης σπουδῆς in line 162 (see the commentary above). The word ὀλιγωρία itself is fairly common in the fifth and fourth centuries with the meaning “contempt.” But sometimes the light esteem involved indicates “neglect” rather than “contempt,” as it does here in the *Precepts*. A good parallel for this use is found in the Hippocratic treatise *On the Art* (11.29), which dates to the late fifth century, and where disease is said to defeat treatment in several circumstances including “as a result of the neglect of the patient” (διὰ τε τὴν τῶν καμνόντων ὀλιγωρίην). Most significantly, Aristoxenus uses the word twice in his account of the dissolution of the Pythagorean societies in southern Italy, which was probably part of his treatise *Concerning Pythagoras and His Associates* and is preserved by Iamblichus later in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (250.5 and 150.10 = fr. 18 Wehrli). Sometimes it is hard to distinguish between the meanings “contempt” and “neglect” in so far as neglect can arise from contempt, so that in one of these

passages (250.5) “neglect” works best, while in the other “contempt” is best. Here in the *Precepts* the translation “neglect” is clearly called for.

Line 173 – **τὴν ἰσχυροτάτην τε καὶ σαφειστάτην αἰτίαν**: Both of these adjectives are, of course, very common in the fifth and fourth centuries. They are not commonly paired in any period but see Lucian, *How to Write History* (19.4) and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Thucydides* (31.18).

Line 174 – **τῶν πολλῶν ἀνθρώπων**: For this phrase meaning “most men” see, e.g., Pl. *Ap.* 35a1.

Line 174 – **κακίας τε καὶ φαυλότητος**: Again both of these nouns are very common in the fifth and fourth centuries but their combination is surprisingly not common. It is interesting that the same pair of nouns appears above in line 46 of this fragment but nowhere else in Iamblichus.

Line 175 – **βοσκηματώδη γὰρ καὶ εἰκαίαν**: Strabo is the earliest author to use the adjective βοσκηματώδης but it is also very rare, appearing only five times before this passage in Iamblichus. Iamblichus uses it once elsewhere (*Protr.* 115.29). This pattern of usage would suggest that the adjective did not go back to Aristoxenus, but its overall rarity makes this far from certain. The use of the noun βόσκημα to refer to cattle and other animals is, of course, common in the fourth century. It is notable, however, that the second adjective, εἰκαῖος, with one exception does not appear until the third century BC and does not become common until the first century AD. It appears in one other passage of Iamblichus. The one exception to this pattern of late usage is the use of the adjective in fragment 308 of Sophocles τίκτει γὰρ οὐδὲν ἔσθλόν εἰκαῖα σχολή. It is the adjective formed from the more common adverb εἰκῆ. This adverb has been used prominently in the immediate context here (lines 169 and 171) and also elsewhere in the *Precepts* (see the preceding note) so, given the importance of the concept for the Pythagoreans, it is perhaps not unexpected that they would use the rare adjective εἰκαῖος.

Line 175 – **τεκνοποιίαν**: For the usage of this noun see the commentary on lines 148–9 above.

21 | Fragment 10: The Appropriate and the Inappropriate in Human Interaction. On Starting Points and Rulers

Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, 180–3. For lines 51–5 cf. Stobaeus 2.31.119 (fr. 6).

(179) καὶ ἄλλην δὲ μέθοδον ἀνεῦρε τοῦ ἀναστέλλειν τοὺς 1
ἀνθρώπους ἀπὸ τῆς ἀδικίας . . . 2
3
(180) ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ ἐν τῇ πρὸς ἕτερον χρεῖα ἔστι τις δικαιοσύνη, καὶ 4
ταύτης τοιοῦτόν τινα τρόπον λέγεται ὑπὸ τῶν Πυθαγορείων 5
παραδίδοσθαι. 6
7
εἶναι γὰρ κατὰ τὰς ὁμιλίας τὸ μὲν εὐκαιρον, τὸ δὲ ἄκαιρον, 8
διαιρεῖσθαι δὲ ἡλικίας τε διαφορᾷ καὶ ἀξιώματος καὶ 9
οἰκειότητος τῆς συγγενικῆς καὶ εὐεργεσίας, [καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο 10
τοιοῦτον ἐν ταῖς πρὸς ἀλλήλους διαφοραῖς ὃν ὑπάρχει]. ἔστι 11
γὰρ τι ὁμιλίας εἶδος, ὃ φαίνεται νεωτέρῳ μὲν πρὸς νεώτερον οὐκ 12
ἄκαιρον εἶναι, πρὸς δὲ τὸν πρεσβύτερον ἄκαιρον. οὔτε γὰρ 13
ὀργῆς οὔτε ἀπειλῆς εἶδος πᾶν (ἄκαιρον) οὔτε θρασύτητος, 14
ἀλλὰ πᾶσαν τὴν τοιαύτην ἀκαιρίαν εὐλαβητέον εἶναι τῷ 15
νεωτέρῳ πρὸς τὸν πρεσβύτερον. παραπλήσιον δὲ (181) τινα 16
εἶναι καὶ τὸν περὶ τοῦ ἀξιώματος λόγον· πρὸς γὰρ ἄνδρα ἐπὶ 17
καλοκαγαθίᾳ ἔχοντα ἀληθινὸν ἀξίωμα οὐτ' εὐσχημον οὐτ' 18
εὐκαιρον εἶναι προσφέρειν οὔτε παρρησίαν πολλήν οὔτε τὰ 19
λοιπὰ τῶν ἀρτίως εἰρημένων. [παραπλήσια δὲ τοῦτοις καὶ 20
περὶ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς γονεῖς ὁμιλίας ἐλέγετο, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ 21
περὶ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς εὐεργέτας.] εἶναι δὲ ποικίλην τινὰ καὶ 22
πολυειδῆ τὴν τοῦ καιροῦ χρεῖαν· καὶ γὰρ τῶν ὀργιζομένων τε 23
καὶ θυμουμένων τοὺς μὲν εὐκαίρως τοῦτο ποιεῖν, τοὺς δὲ 24
ἀκαίρως, καὶ πάλιν αὖ τῶν ὀρεγομένων τε καὶ ἐπιθυμούντων 25
καὶ ὁρμώντων ἐφ' ὅτιδήποτε τοῖς μὲν ἀκολουθεῖν καιρόν, τοῖς δ' 26

ἀκαιρίαν. [τὸν αὐτὸν δ' εἶναι λόγον καὶ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων παθῶν 27
 τε καὶ πράξεων (182) καὶ διαθέσεων καὶ ὁμιλιῶν καὶ ἐντεύξεων.] 28
 εἶναι δὲ τὸν καιρὸν μέχρι μὲν τινος διδακτὸν [τε καὶ ἀπαράλογον 29
 καὶ τεχνολογίαν ἐπιδεχόμενον, καθόλου δὲ καὶ ἀπλῶς οὐδὲν 30
 αὐτῷ τούτων ὑπάρχειν]. ἀκόλουθα δὲ εἶναι καὶ σχεδὸν 31
 τοιαῦτα οἷα συμπαρέπεσθαι τῇ τοῦ καιροῦ φύσει τὴν τε 32
 ὀνομαζομένην ὥραν καὶ τὸ πρέπον καὶ τὸ ἀρμόττον, [καὶ εἴ τι 33
 ἄλλο τυγχάνει τούτοις ὁμοιογενὲς ὄν]. 34

ἀρχὴν δὲ ἀπεφαίνοντο ἐν παντὶ ἔν τι τῶν τιμιωτάτων εἶναι 35
 ὁμοίως ἐν ἐπιστήμῃ τε καὶ ἐμπειρίᾳ καὶ ἐν γενέσει, καὶ πάλιν 36
 αὖ ἐν οἰκίᾳ τε καὶ πόλει καὶ στρατοπέδῳ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς τοιούτοις 37
 συστήμασι, δυσθεώρητον δ' εἶναι [καὶ δυσσύνοπτον] τὴν τῆς 38
 ἀρχῆς φύσιν [ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς εἰρημένοις.] ἔν τε γὰρ ταῖς ἐπιστήμαις 39
 οὐ τῆς τυχούσης εἶναι διανοίας τὸ καταμαθεῖν τε καὶ κρίναι 40
 καλῶς βλέψαντας εἰς τὰ μέρη τῆς πραγματείας (183), ποῖον 41
 τούτων ἀρχή. μεγάλην δ' εἶναι διαφορὰν καὶ σχεδὸν περὶ ὅλου 42
 τε καὶ παντὸς τὸν κίνδυνον γίνεσθαι μὴ ληφθείσης ὀρθῶς τῆς 43
 ἀρχῆς· οὐδὲν γάρ, ὥς ἀπλῶς εἶπεῖν, ἔτι τῶν μετὰ ταῦτα ὑγιᾶς 44
 γίνεσθαι ἀγνοηθείσης τῆς ἀληθινῆς ἀρχῆς. [τὸν αὐτὸν δ' εἶναι 45
 λόγον καὶ περὶ τῆς ἐτέρας ἀρχῆς·] οὕτε γὰρ οἰκίαν οὔτε πόλιν εὖ 46
 ποτε ἂν οἰκηθῆναι μὴ ὑπάρξαντος ἀληθινοῦ ἄρχοντος καὶ 47
 κυριεύοντος τῆς ἀρχῆς τε καὶ ἐπιστασίας ἐκουσίως. 48
 ἀμφοτέρων γὰρ δεῖ βουλομένων τὴν ἐπιστατείαν γίνεσθαι, 49
 ὁμοίως τοῦ τε ἄρχοντος καὶ τῶν ἀρχομένων, ὥσπερ καὶ τὰς 50
 μαθήσεις τὰς ὀρθῶς γινομένης ἐκουσίως δεῖν ἔφασαν γίνεσθαι, 51
 ἀμφοτέρων βουλομένων, τοῦ τε διδάσκοντος καὶ τοῦ 52
 μανθάνοντος· ἀντιτείνοντος γὰρ ὁποτέρου δήποτε τῶν 53
 εἰρημένων οὐκ ἂν ἐπιτελεσθῆναι κατὰ τρόπον τὸ προκείμενον 54
 ἔργον. 55

οὕτω μὲν οὖν τὸ πείθεσθαι τοῖς ἄρχουσι καλὸν εἶναι ἐδοκίμαξε 56
 καὶ τὸ τοῖς διδασκάλοις ὑπακούειν. τεκμήριον δὲ δι' ἔργων (184) 57
 μέγιστον παρείχετο τοιοῦτον. 58
 59
 60

8 τὸ μὲν ... τὸ δὲ Nauck] τὸν μὲν ... τὸν δὲ Mss. 11 διαφοραῖς]
 προσφοραῖς ? Diels διαφορᾶς Cataudella 12 νεωτέρῳ μὲν πρὸς
 νεώτερον] πρὸς μὲν νεώτερον Nauck 13 τὸν] om. Nauck

14 <ῥκαιρον>] Deubner 1935: 681, cf. 101.9 <εῡκαιρον> Rohde
 <προσῆκειν πᾶσιν> Diels 17–18 ἐπὶ καλοκαγαθία ἔχοντα]
 Brisson/Segonds ἐπὶ καλοκαγαθίας ἦκοντα Mss. 19 πολλήν] Cobet
 πάλιν F 25 αὖ τῶν] Westermann αὖτῶν F 38 αὖ] Wester-
 mann δύο F 43 περὶ ὅλου] περὶ <τοῦ> ὅλου Harder, Ocellus 133

Translation

(179) He [sc. Pythagoras] also discovered another way of restraining people from injustice . . .

(180) Since justice is also something involving intercourse with others, it is said that some such way of dealing with this intercourse as the following has also been handed down by the Pythagoreans.

For, with regard to interactions with others there is appropriateness and inappropriateness, and they are distinguished by difference in age, in status, in family relationship and in benefits conferred [, and in any other difference of this sort between people]. For there is a certain form of interaction that seems not to be inappropriate for the young in respect to the young but is inappropriate with respect to an elder. For, not every form of anger or threat or boldness is inappropriate, but the young must be on guard against all such behavior as inappropriate toward their elders. There is also a similar account concerning reputation; for towards a man who has a deserved reputation for nobility it is neither seemly nor appropriate to employ either great frankness or the rest of the things just mentioned. [Remarks similar to these were also made about interactions with parents, and in the same way about interactions with benefactors.] The practice of what is appropriate is something complex and has many forms. For even of those who become angry and enraged, some do so appropriately and others inappropriately. And again of those yearning for, desiring, and eagerly pursuing something, appropriateness accompanies some and inappropriateness others. [And the same account applies to other emotions, activities, dispositions, interactions and encounters.] Up to a point what is appropriate is teachable [and not without method and admits of systematic treatment, but these characteristics do not apply to it universally and without qualification]. It is pretty much the following sorts of things that are in conformity with and accompany the nature of the appropriate: what is called the timely, the suitable and the fitting [and if there happens to be anything else of the same kind].

And they declared that in everything a starting point is something of highest value, alike in sciences and practices and in generation and again in a household and a city and in a military camp [and all such organizations.] But the nature of the starting point is difficult to see [and detect in all the things that have been mentioned]. For, in the case of the sciences, it does not belong to just any intellect, after having looked at the parts of the investigation, to understand and distinguish well what sort of thing is a starting point of these things. But it makes a great difference and nearly everything is at risk, if the starting point has not been grasped correctly. For, generally speaking, nothing of the things that follow after will still be sound if the true starting point is not known. [The same account also applies to the other sort of starting point.] For neither a household nor a city would ever be well managed, if one who is truly ruler and master has not willingly initiated the rule and authority. For supervision should arise when both desire it, both the ruler and the ruled alike, just as they also said it was necessary that learning that arises correctly come to be willingly, when both wish it, the teacher and the learner. For if ever either one of those mentioned resists, the appointed task would not duly reach its end.

In this way, then, he thought it good to obey rulers and submit to teachers. And he provided the greatest evidence of this by deeds such as the following.

Extent of the Fragment

Rohde (1871–2 = 1901: 158–9) argues that the treatment of “the appropriate” and “the starting point” in sections 180–3 “belongs without doubt to the *Precepts* of Aristoxenus,” because 1) the Pythagoreans rather than Pythagoras are the subject throughout and 2) because, among other similarities to the confirmed content of the *Precepts*, one sentence towards the end of section 183 reproduces the main idea and some of the distinctive language of a fragment of the *Precepts* preserved by Stobaeus (fr. 6). Both Dillon and Hershbell (1991: 191, n. 15) and Burkert (1972: 101, n. 17) follow Rohde’s conclusion. The passage is also included in DK’s collection of the fragments of the *Pythagorean Precepts* (1.470. 1–38), but not in Wehrli’s. Staab also has hesitations, which, in my judgment, call for minor modifications in Rohde’s position but do

not undercut his main point. Staab agrees that the basic form of the expression of most of section 183 (Deubner 102. 2–14) goes back to Aristoxenus, although he thinks that Iamblichus has also refashioned various aspects (2002: 390, n. 956). He notes that ἀπαράλογον at the beginning of section 182 is unparalleled in Greek literature and that all other words with the stem ἀπαράλογ- belong to Christian-era authors. From this he concludes that Rohde was wrong to think that all of 180–3 came directly from Aristoxenus (2002: 389, n. 954). As my comparisons between the fragments found in Stobaeus and the overlapping passages in Iamblichus show, however, both Iamblichus and the source he used for the *Precepts* tend to expand Aristoxenus' text. One common method of expansion is to add another adjective to a series. The adjective ἀπαράλογον is the second in a series of adjectives: “teachable and not *without method* and admitting systematic treatment.” It is thus very likely that Iamblichus introduced it. In fact, I would add the third adjectival phrase, τεχνολογίαν ἐπιδεχόμενον (“admitting systematic treatment”), as another likely intrusion by Iamblichus. Apart from a possible use in the *Anonymous Londinensis*, all the uses of τεχνολογία belong to the Christian era and it appears six times in Iamblichus. Nonetheless, these insertions in no way undercut the likelihood that sections 180–3 as a whole come from Aristoxenus. Staab also notes that the expression “varied and of many forms” in section 181 is used by Iamblichus himself in section 160; since, however, it is also used by Aristoxenus in fragment 3, there is no reason to regard section 181 as composed by Iamblichus rather than Aristoxenus. As Staab himself notes, it appears as if in section 160 Iamblichus has adopted the expression under the influence of Aristoxenus (2002: 389, n. 953).

In the sections immediately preceding and immediately following sections 180–3, Iamblichus presents his discussion in terms of what Pythagoras himself said or did using verbs in the third-person singular. Rohde's point remains crucial: the switch to the use of the third-person plural in sections 180–3 strongly suggests that Iamblichus is now using another source. The *Precepts* always use the plural, and, since the similarity in content and vocabulary of a sentence in section 183 with fragment 6 shows that some of the material is derived from the *Pythagorean Precepts*, it is probable that Iamblichus was relying on the *Precepts* throughout sections 180–3, where the plural verb forms are used. Rohde's basic points can be considerably strengthened. First, as in the

Precepts, sections 180–3 are for the most part presented in indirect statement after expressed or implied verbs of saying and thinking. The verbs of saying and thinking are missing in the first part of the passage and were probably omitted by Iamblichus, but ἀπεφαίνοντο appears in the middle of section 182 and ἔφασαν towards the end of 183. The sentence that begins section 180 is clearly of Iamblichus' composition, since it makes the transition from talking about Pythagoras, who has been the subject in section 179, to talking about the Pythagoreans. It seems likely that in Aristoxenus there was a verb such as ἔφασκον at the beginning of the fragment. Iamblichus somewhat awkwardly has the phrase "it is said that ... the following sort of behavior was handed down by the Pythagoreans" govern the accusative and infinitive construction that is found in the first twenty-seven lines of the fragment before the first explicit verb of saying or thinking appears (ἀπεφαίνοντο). Second, the content of sections 180–3 fits both of the two basic types of content found in the fragments of the *Precepts*. The emphasis on what should be done is not as prominent here as in some fragments, but both δεῖν and verbal adjectives in -τέος, which the *Precepts* use to express moral obligation, are found in sections 180–3. More prominent is the second type of content typical of the *Precepts*, an interest in analyzing and classifying concepts. Just as fragment 3 analyzes the concept of desire and fragment 7 the concept of luck, so these sections give an analysis of two further concepts: the appropriate and the starting point. As in fragments 3 and 7, there is emphasis on classifying the parts and kinds involved in these concepts.

Thus both the form and content of sections 180–3 make it very likely that they derive from the *Pythagorean Precepts*, as is confirmed by the similarity to fragment 6 preserved by Stobaeus. These sections, however, show a tendency to elaborate on the points in a way that is typical of Iamblichus in places where we can compare Iamblichus' version with the original text of Aristoxenus. It is difficult to be certain when the elaboration should be assigned to Iamblichus, but I have put in brackets the phrases that appear most likely to be a result of his desire to be explicit (lines 10–11, 27–8, 29–31, 33–4). The sentence running from lines 20 to 22 seems very likely to be due to Iamblichus but for a slightly different reason. Here the indirect discourse of the passage is broken and a finite verb is used: "Remarks similar to these were also made (ἐλέγετο) about interactions with parents, and in the same way about interactions with benefactors." Also, even though the verb is a verb of speaking it does not

introduce indirect discourse. Instead Iamblichus seems to be marking the fact that he is abridging here and leaving out what the Pythagoreans said about interactions with parents and benefactors. Even beyond the passages put in brackets, it is possible that there has been some expansion in brief phrases or even single words, which is difficult to detect, except in the case of words which are first used later than the time of Aristoxenus, such as ἀπαράλογον, which was noticed by Staab. Nonetheless, it remains the case that it is very likely that the basic content and much of the language of sections 180–3, especially the parts outside the brackets, goes back to Aristoxenus.

Is This One Fragment or Two?

The first part of the fragment (lines 8–34) focuses on the topic of appropriateness and inappropriateness, while the last part (lines 36–56) abruptly shifts to a discussion of the starting point or ruling principle (ἀρχή). There is no overlap in terminology between the two parts. It is particularly striking that neither “the appropriate” nor any of the terms used in discussing it in the first part of the fragment appear again in the second part. It is true that some conceptual links can be observed between the two passages. By the end of the passage on the starting point, the discussion has turned to interactions between people: between rulers and ruled and teachers and students. This discussion can be connected to the subject of the first part of the fragment, appropriateness in interactions. Indeed, at the end of the passage from Aristoxenus, Iamblichus highlights just this aspect of the last section saying “in this way, then, he thought it good to obey rulers and submit to teachers.” It is important to remember that Iamblichus is quoting the fragment as part of his discussion of justice in Pythagoreanism. He seems to take proper behavior towards rulers and teachers as signs of justice and, immediately after the remark just quoted, gives an example of Pythagoras’ own just action in his treatment of his teacher Pherecydes. Despite these possible conceptual connections between the two parts of the fragment, the passage on the starting point is not in itself structured to be primarily about interactions between people. Those interactions are given as an example of a more general principle, the need to establish the right starting point, which is shared both between the sciences and certain human relations. There is nothing in the text that connects this more

general principle back to the discussion of appropriateness in the first part of the fragment. Another possible connection between the two parts can be seen in the Neoplatonic tradition. Proclus (*in Alc.* 121) assigns to the Pythagoreans the view that “right moment” (καιρός) is the first cause (τὴν πρώτην αἰτίαν), which provides good to all things (Staab 2002: 389, n. 955). It would clearly be appropriate to describe καιρός so understood as a “starting point” (ἀρχή). The difficulty, however, is once again that nothing in the actual text of the fragment indicates that καιρός is being understood in this way.

Thus, while connections can be made between the two parts of the fragment, the fragment itself does not make those connections. There seem, then, to be two possibilities. First, it might be that the style of the *Pythagorean Precepts* was such that precepts on different but potentially related topics were set side by side without drawing explicit connections; Aristoxenus was not providing a strictly ordered and coherent presentation but just a loosely connected set of topics. Iamblichus would then be quoting a continuous passage from the *Precepts*, which embodies this loose type of connection. Second, Iamblichus may be doing here what he clearly does elsewhere, taking two different passages from the *Precepts* and combining them. He is collecting material for his discussion of justice and finds two different passages in the *Precepts* that seem relevant, the first dealing with appropriateness in our interactions with others and the second dealing with proper relations between rulers and ruled and teachers and students. He combines the two with little attempt to make them cohere. His main interest in the second passage is on the interactions discussed at the end, but he feels that the discussion of those interactions is not clear without some of the preceding comments on starting points, so he quotes those too. It may be that he thinks the two passages go together well because of some of the implicit connections between them discussed above. The second of the two possibilities seems preferable, since we have clear evidence that Iamblichus, for his own purposes, did combine material from different parts of the *Pythagorean Precepts* (e.g., inserting a sentence from fragment 2 in the midst of fragment 8). It is possible that Aristoxenus did use the loose manner of composition described above in connecting topics but this seems less likely, since the structure of the discussion within individual topics, in this case of appropriateness and the starting point, is quite tight. Accordingly,

I print the two texts together to show their original context but put a break between them to suggest that they did not originally belong together and will discuss them separately.

Section 1– Lines 8–34: the Appropriate in Interactions with Others: the Meaning of *καίρως*

Before analyzing the content of these lines, it is necessary to give a brief overview of the central concept invoked in them, *καίρως* (see Trédé 1992 and Wilson 1980 and 1981). With this overview as background, I will then examine the argument of the fragment itself, before turning to detailed consideration of two main issues raised by it: 1) the similarity of the fragment to Peripatetic ethics and Aristotle's theory of the mean and 2) the relation of the use of *καίρως* in the fragment to its use elsewhere, notably a) in the medical tradition, b) in the philosophical tradition (especially the Pythagorean tradition outside the *Precepts*) and finally c) in the rhetorical tradition.

Καίρως and its cognates dominate the first section of the fragment appearing fourteen times. Lines 23, 32 and 29 with their references to “the practice of what is appropriate” (τὴν τοῦ καιροῦ χρείαν), “the nature of the appropriate” (τῇ τοῦ καιροῦ φύσει) and “whether the appropriate is teachable” (τὸν καιρὸν . . . διδασκτόν) make clear that *καίρως* is the general term that refers to the study of what is appropriate and inappropriate. Behavior based on proper understanding of this concept is *εὐκαιρος*, i.e. makes good use of the appropriate, and behavior that is not based on proper understanding is *ἄκαιρος*, i.e. does not make use of what is appropriate (lines 8, 13, 24 and 25). Not unnaturally the general topic of what is appropriate is often identified with good use of the appropriate so that *καίρως* becomes identified with what is *εὐκαιρος*.

The most common use of *καίρως* in Greek is temporal. It refers to “the right time” or “due season” for something to happen and, by slight extension, to the “opportunity” that arises at the right time. Thus, in Thucydides, Cleon advises the Athenians, who are debating what to do about the Spartans blockaded at Pylos, not to keep sending messengers and not, by delaying, to let slip the favorable time/opportunity (Thuc. 4.27 διαμέλλειν καιρὸν παριέντας). Earlier in the fifth century, Herodotus is also employing the temporal use when he refers to the Athenians as

“not being present at the appointed time” (ἐς τὸν καιρὸν οὐ παρεγίνοντο) to meet with a citizen of Aegina who was to betray the city to them (6.90).

It is important to recognize, however, that in some contexts the reference may not be exclusively temporal and in many there may be no temporal reference at all. J. R. Wilson’s fine studies, on which I draw here, have shown that it is important to avoid the tendency to reduce all usages to the temporal sense (1980 and 1981). Often the word refers to due or appropriate measure rather than specifically to due or appropriate time. This is very clear in some early Greek gnomic sayings, where it is linked to the concept of measure. Thus, observing *καιρός* is equated to the traditional advice of “do nothing in excess” (μηδὲν ἄγαν – Theognis 401; Chilon in Critias DK88B7). The goal is not just to do things at the right time but to observe moderation in our actions at all times. Similarly, in Hesiod, *Works and Days* 694, we find the advice μέτρα φυλάσσεσθαι· καιρὸς δ’ ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἄριστος – “Observe measure. The right measure is best in all things.” In the preceding four lines Hesiod has urged the listener not to entrust his entire livelihood to a ship but to keep the majority of it safe and not to overload a wagon lest the axles break. If line 694 is a closing comment on these lines (West 1978: 326) then it clearly has nothing to do with time; there is “no right time to overload your wagon” or entrust all your livelihood to one ship (Wilson 1980: 179). It refers instead to the proper measure that we should observe in loading the wagon or in entrusting our livelihood to ships (see Trédé 1992: 83–96).

Aristotle uses *καιρός* mostly in the temporal sense (Wilson 1980: 201) and treats it as the good in the category of time (*EE* 1217b32), although in at least one important case to be discussed below, he clearly goes beyond just the temporal to consider other aspects of appropriateness (*EN* 1104a9). Plato, moreover, in addition to temporal uses, also treats it as equivalent to “due measure.” Thus, at *Philebus* 66a7, he asserts that pleasure is not the first of possessions or even the second but rather nature has chosen “measure, the moderate and what is appropriate” (μέτρον καὶ τὸ μέτριον καὶ καίριον) as the most valuable possession. Similarly, in the *Statesman* (284e6) one of the two main kinds of measurement is described as that which measures in relation to τὸ μέτριον καὶ τὸ πρέπον καὶ τὸν καιρὸν καὶ τὸ δέον. None of the other terms on this list are temporal and there is no reason to regard τὸν καιρὸν in this way. Rather, all four terms are used almost synonymously: “the

moderate, the fitting, the appropriate and the needful”; all four refer to due measure. Thus “due season” or “due measure” are both acceptable translations for *καιρός* depending on the context. Neither of these is particularly idiomatic English, however, and “appropriate time” or “appropriate measure” work better and “appropriateness” works well as a translation for the general concept indicated by *καιρός* when it is not clear whether appropriate time or appropriate measure is meant.

Section 1 – Lines 8–34: Overview of the Argument

It is hard to be sure exactly what Aristoxenus saw as the central focus of these lines. The *γάρ* (“for”) in the first sentence indicates that what is quoted is evidence for some more general proposition. It might have been inserted by Iamblichus to integrate the quotation from Aristoxenus with his own introductory sentence, but it may belong to Aristoxenus and thus indicate that what Iamblichus is quoting was not the beginning of a section in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. In that case we are missing the general proposition and context for the discussion in Aristoxenus. The subject matter of what Iamblichus does quote is given in the fourth and fifth words, *τὰς ὁμιλίας*, interactions with others. A number of parallels from Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* show that *ὁμιλίας* are likely to refer to basic social intercourse with others. Thus Aristotle asserts that friendship is less common among morose and elderly people because they are surly and have less enjoyment in *ὁμιλίας* (*EN* 1158a3). Here it would appear that *ὁμιλία* refers to the basic social intercourse or interactions, the avoidance of which leads these people to be less likely to form friendships. At 1172a11 Aristotle asserts that the friendship of the good is good and grows with *ὁμιλίας*. Again *ὁμιλία* refers to the social intercourse, this time between friends, that allows the friendship to grow. The closest parallel to the *Pythagorean Precepts*, however, is Aristotle’s discussion, in Chapter 6 of Book 4 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, of a virtue which he says has no name but lies in the mean between obsequiousness and surliness and is sometimes called agreeableness by modern scholars (e.g., Rackham in the Loeb, 1926). Aristotle says that this virtue has to do with the pleasure and pain that one causes to others and that, although it has no name, it closely resembles friendship, differing only in that it lacks the emotional factor of affection for the other people

involved. The crucial similarity to the *Pythagorean Precepts* is that this virtue is said to be involved ἐν ταῖς ὁμιλίαις, “with social intercourse,” as well as “with common life and the sharing of words and deeds” (EN 1126b11–12). Thus the sphere of this Aristotelian virtue seems quite similar to the sphere of action of this section of the *Pythagorean Precepts*: everyday social interaction with others. The scope of the discussion in the *Precepts* is much wider than in Aristotle, however. Aristotle’s virtue of agreeableness is just concerned with how agreeable we make ourselves to others, whereas this section of the *Precepts* appears to be concerned with all aspects of our interactions with others and hence with the core of our moral lives.

It is important to note that, although Iamblichus quotes this section of the *Pythagorean Precepts* in his discussion of the Pythagorean treatment of justice (VP 167–86), there is no explicit reference to justice or injustice in this fragment of the *Precepts*. It is of course true that justice arises in our dealings with others and this is presumably why Iamblichus quotes this passage here but, as Aristotle’s virtue of agreeableness shows, not all of our dealings with others involve issues of justice. For example, what Aristotle calls distributive justice deals with the equitable distribution of honor and wealth and, while many of our dealings with others involve these issues, not all of them do. Having lunch with an acquaintance involves basic social interaction but need not involve justice. On its surface this fragment of the *Precepts* does not seem to be about justice in the sense of the fair distribution of goods and honor. It is natural then to ask whether there was a discussion of justice in this sense in the *Precepts* or whether its discussion of dealings with others was limited to the remarks made in this passage? There is no discussion of justice proper elsewhere in the surviving fragments of the *Precepts*. Of course, it is very plausible that there was such a discussion but that it has not survived. The only problem for this view is that, if there were such a discussion we might have expected Iamblichus to quote it in his discussion of the Pythagorean treatment of justice; the fact that he quotes this section instead may thus imply that this was the closest thing to a discussion of justice that he found in the *Precepts*.

There are some assumptions underlying this view that need to be examined, however. First, it assumes that Iamblichus had access to the entirety of the *Pythagorean Precepts* and thus could have quoted from a section on justice. We simply do not know, however, in what form he

encountered the *Precepts*. It may be that he was drawing on some sort of compendium of Pythagorean teachings. This just pushes the question back a step further, however. If there was no explicit discussion of justice in the compendium on which Iamblichus could draw, why was that? It would surely seem natural for such a compendium to include the Pythagorean discussion of justice in the *Pythagorean Precepts*, if there was one. Second, Iamblichus may just be doing an idiosyncratic job of citing the *Precepts* and include the discussion of social interactions found in this fragment, while overlooking a more direct treatment of justice elsewhere in the *Precepts*. We know that the Pythagoreans were concerned about issues of justice, since Aristotle tells us that the Pythagoreans of the fifth century tried to define justice in terms of numbers (*Metaph.* 985b29–30 – see further below). It would thus be surprising if the *Pythagorean Precepts* had nothing to say on the issue, although it is noteworthy that there is not a single mention of justice or injustice in any of the fragments of the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus or Iamblichus. So it may be that Iamblichus does not quote a direct treatment of justice from the *Pythagorean Precepts* because there was no such treatment to quote, or such a treatment did exist and the failure of it to be preserved can be explained by the vagaries of the procedures of Iamblichus or other members of the later tradition.

Appropriateness (καίρος) is the key concept deployed by the *Pythagorean Precepts* concerning our social interactions with others. The important point to emphasize, in light of the overview of Greek usage of the term provided above, is that, in this fragment and in the *Precepts* as a whole, while the focus is on what is appropriate in specific circumstances, the concept is not just temporal and indeed puts emphasis on other factors. For example, here in fragment 10, certain behavior is said to be never appropriate towards elders (lines 13–16), so that the issue cannot be that of the appropriate time for such behavior. The conception of καίρος is not defined in this fragment but in fragment 3, its opposite, “inappropriateness,” is defined in a way that in effect defines καίρος and illuminates fragment 10. Fragment 3 is a discussion of desire. As part of the discussion, three types of mistaken desire are identified: shamelessness, lack of proportion and inappropriateness (ἀκαρία). Inappropriateness is then glossed as arising when a desire “occurs when it should not and is directed at things to which it should not be directed.” Thus, the concept of καίρος assumed here is clearly more than

just a temporal concept. It has to do with the right time but also with the right object. In fragment 4, although *καιρός* is not explicitly mentioned, the emphasis on avoiding what is precocious in the generation of plants and animals is clearly an appeal to observe the right time. In fragment 10, on the other hand, the emphasis is on the proper object.

The fragment makes a distinction between actions that make good use of what is appropriate (*εὔκαιρον*) and those that are inappropriate (*ἄκαιρον*). In determining the appropriate and inappropriate, four factors are initially invoked, none temporal and all having to do with the features of the person with whom we are dealing: age, status, family relationship to us, and whether one of us is the benefactor of the other. The idea seems to be that in determining how to act towards another person one should consider first whether the person is the same age, older or younger. The second factor, status, is less clear. It might refer to whether the other person is one's ruler or commander, whatever their real moral worth. In lines 16–22, however, where Iamblichus appears to give an explanation of what is meant by the second through fourth factors, he gives as an example of status a man who has a true reputation for nobility (*καλοκαγαθία*). Thus the second factor may be the real moral nobility of the person we are dealing with. The third factor considers whether the other person is kin, and how close the kinship is. It may be appropriate to act differently regarding one's child than regarding one's parent. Finally, one should consider whether the other person has received some important benefaction from us in the past or whether we have received such a benefaction from them. We might well behave differently towards someone who has helped us out in an important way than towards someone with whom we have no such connection.

How are these four categories of relationship connected to the discussion of friendship elsewhere in the *Precepts* (in fragment 11)? Three of the relationships discussed here could be considered independently of friendship. We need not have any connection of friendship with people of differing age and status and, while a benefaction given or received might serve as the basis for a friendship, the affection necessary for friendship need not arise from such a benefaction. The case of family relations is more difficult. One might argue that for the Greeks friendship (*φιλία*) would necessarily exist with at least certain relatives such as parents. On the other hand, it is possible if uncommon that no friendly feelings arise between parent and child so that the discussion of the

impact of family relations on the appropriateness of our actions is independent of whether we have friendly feelings towards our relatives. Thus it seems most reasonable to regard the first part of fragment 10 as setting out the general guidelines for our interactions with others, whereas friendship will be treated later as a special case. In fact, the discussion of friendship in fragment 11 seems to assume the distinctions introduced here in fragment 10. Thus, when asserting that competition should be removed from friendships, it emphasizes that this is particularly the case in friendships with family friends, with elders and with benefactors. Thus three of the four factors introduced in fragment 10, family relationship, age and benefits conferred are specifically mentioned and difference in age is appealed to again later in the fragment as an important factor. It thus appears very likely that fragment 10 came earlier in the *Pythagorean Precepts* and served as a foundation on which the later discussion of friendship in fragment 11 was based.

In lines 13–16 Aristoxenus gives an example of how we might apply one of the categories of relationship, age, in order to determine appropriate action. The example given involves the emotion of anger. First, it is asserted “not every form of anger, threat, or boldness is inappropriate.” This simple statement has very important implications for our understanding of the ethical system of the *Pythagorean Precepts* as a whole. First, the assertion that not every form of anger is inappropriate implies that many or even most forms of anger are inappropriate in themselves, apart from considerations of context. The fragment thus does not seem to be stating the extreme view that the morality of all action is determined solely by the specific circumstances. Second, it is also clearly the case that no hard and fast rule can be given against every form of anger. Evidently it is appropriate to get angry and make threats in certain cases. This is in agreement with Aristotle’s statement in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that we praise the man who gets angry on the right grounds, against the right persons etc. (1125b31–2). It is also in agreement with general Athenian ethics which found an important role for anger (Allen 2003), but it is a little surprising in light of the anecdotes about the Pythagoreans, which emphasized their distrust of anger and particularly the dangers of punishing in anger (e.g., Archytas A7; Huffman 2005: 283–92). It seems quite plausible that the example of anger has been chosen as an example in this passage of the *Pythagorean Precepts* precisely because some Pythagoreans had regarded it in purely negative

terms as an enemy to reason. The *Precepts* agree that certain forms of anger should always be avoided but argue that some forms are appropriate.

The specific point of the anger example here is that in some cases its appropriateness is determined by the four factors that have been mentioned, in this case by the age of the person with whom we are angry. Aristotle's discussion of anger in the *Nicomachean Ethics* suggests that the major motivation for anger was an injury done to one by another (1126a3–28). The *Pythagorean Precepts* thus seem to say that it is appropriate to stand up for oneself in the face of such injuries but only with regard to those who are the same age (or younger than oneself?). A young man can in certain circumstances get angry with another young man (lines 12–13). The *Precepts* go on to assert, however, that all such behavior should be avoided as inappropriate for a young man with regard to his elders. The young are never supposed to get angry with, threaten or act in an overbold or presumptuous way towards their elders. This makes some sense if injuries to one's honor are the primary cause of anger. It is primarily those of the same age with whom honor is contested and it also might be legitimate to be angry with a younger person who did not show proper deference. The idea seems to be, however, that it is unseemly to contest honor with one's elders, who have an inborn superiority to us just because of their age. The *Precepts* then give a second example of appropriateness, this time having to do with the factor of reputation or nobility. Towards a man of true nobility it is not seemly or appropriate to speak too frankly or to get angry, threaten or act presumptuously.

Having identified the four factors that must be taken into account in determining whether an action is appropriate or not, the Pythagoreans then make the crucial point that "the practice of what is appropriate is complex and has many forms." The four factors that are important in determining appropriateness can be clearly identified, but it is not a simple matter to determine the appropriate action in light of these factors. To illustrate this point the example of anger is again used: "for even of those who become angry or enraged, some do so appropriately and others inappropriately." This same point is then said to apply in cases of yearning, desiring, etc. This expansion of the point from anger to other cases might look like a possible expansion on Iamblichus' part but since an important section of the *Precepts* was devoted to desire (fr. 9,

lines 71–122), which emphasized, as here in fragment 10, its complexity, it seems likely that the inclusion of desire here is original to the *Precepts*. As we have seen, anger is chosen as an example in lines 13–16, because the appropriateness of some of its forms varied with the age of the person at whom the anger is directed. Here in lines 23–4, anger seems to be chosen again as the example because, as noted above, some Pythagoreans might have regarded it as simple; all anger should be avoided as contrary to rational action. The *Precepts* emphasize that the matter is not this simple and that even in the case of anger the matter is complex and some people get angry appropriately and others inappropriately.

The next crucial assertion about appropriateness in the *Precepts* is that it is teachable up to a point (line 29). In context the emphasis is not on the impossibility of teaching it, but rather the point is that, despite its complexity, which has just been mentioned, it is teachable to a certain degree. The discussion of appropriateness then ends by specifying three features that accompany and thus are presumably characteristic of the appropriate. These are the timely (ἡ ὥρα), the suitable (τὸ πρέπον) and the fitting (τὸ ἁρμόττον). The point seems to be that in determining whether an action is appropriate or not we need to first take into consideration the four factors of age, status, family relationship and benefaction and then see whether our action can be judged to be timely, suitable or fitting in light of these factors. The timely, suitable and fitting are obviously not precise terms and it is this lack of precision that presumably limits the degree to which appropriateness can be taught.

The reference to the timely clearly picks up the typical interpretation of appropriateness (καίρος) in terms of the appropriate time. The other two factors are a little more precise than they first seem, although they are often hard to distinguish from one another. In the *Gorgias* (503e) Plato uses them as a pair, as they are used in the *Precepts*. He says that all craftsmen, including painters, builders and shipwrights, arrange things according to a certain order and compel the one part to suit (πρέπον εἶναι) and fit (ἁρμόττειν) the other. They are widely used in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and we can get some idea of how they might have been used by the Pythagoreans by examining Aristotle's usage. Thus, for Aristotle the virtue of magnificence is manifested by the person who can determine the expense that is suitable (τὸ πρέπον) relative to the spender, the occasion and the object (*EN* 1122a25). Similarly, the agreeable man will, according to Aristotle, associate in different ways with men of

different ranks, with people who are more or less well known to him and with others distinguished in other ways. In each case he will assign what is suitable (τὸ πρέπον) to each person (EN 1126b36–1127a2). Indeed, Aristotle describes moral virtue in general as observing what is suitable (τὸ πρέπον) to each person in contracts, services, actions and emotions (EN 1178a9–13). The fitting (τὸ ἁρμόστικον) is used by Aristotle particularly as what is fitting for a certain sort of person but also in other senses. Thus, he argues that not all people have the same claim on us, that “the claims of parents, brothers, comrades and benefactors are all different” (tr. Rackham 1926). We are to give what is fitting (τὰ ἁρμόστικοντα) to each (EN 1165a16–18). In other cases he uses it without reference to a certain sort of person. Thus, he makes the point that it will not be fitting (ἁρμόσει) to either be without friends or to make friends in excessive numbers (EN 1170b22–3). Aristotle and the *Precepts* are thus in agreement that “the suitable” and “the fitting” are basic terms in moral discourse even if they do not admit of precise definition. However, while the suitable (τὸ πρέπον) and the fitting (τὸ ἁρμόστικον) are mentioned here and have a role in the Pythagorean discussion, they are not the central concepts in the Pythagorean discussion. The Pythagoreans highlight the concept of appropriateness (καίρως), which plays a relatively minor role in Aristotle (see further below).

The section on the appropriate in interactions with others ends with the specification of the timely, the suitable and the fitting as key factors. The passage in Iamblichus abruptly shifts to discussion of the concept of a “starting point” (ἀρχή). As argued above it seems likely that the abrupt change of topic indicates that Iamblichus has stitched together two excerpts from the *Precepts* here. It is thus possible that the text of the *Precepts* went on to give further examples and analysis of what was meant by the timely, the suitable and the fitting and Iamblichus chose to omit that material.

The Relation Between the Pythagorean Treatment of the Appropriate and Peripatetic Ethics

The treatment of the appropriate in the *Pythagorean Precepts* has been shown above to be similar to a number of passages in Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*. The issue of teachability is a crucial case in point.

Aristotle famously emphasizes that philosophical theories can only be as precise as their subject matter and that matters of conduct have nothing fixed or invariable in them so that an ethical system can only be sketched in outline rather than being set out as an exact system (EN 1103b34–1104a8). This applies to the general theory of ethics but even more to the account of what should be done in particular cases. Particular actions do not fall under a precise science (τέχνην – 1104a7), which would be teachable, so that, like the *Pythagorean Precepts*, Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* is committed to the position that ethical action is only teachable up to a point. Aristotle also goes on to make this point using the central term in this part of the *Pythagorean Precepts*, *καῖρός*. He says that, since there is no science governing how to act in individual cases “it is necessary that the agents themselves look to what is appropriate in the circumstances” (τὰ πρὸς τὸν καῖρόν – 1104a8–9). In light of these similarities between Aristotle and the *Pythagorean Precepts* it might be tempting to embrace the traditional interpretation of the *Pythagorean Precepts* according to which Aristoxenus stole the best ideas of Plato and Aristotle and assigned them to the Pythagoreans in order to glorify them (Wehrli 1967: 58). Careful consideration will show, however, that the sort of similarities that exist between fragment 10 of the *Precepts* and Aristotle’s ethics are not consistent with this thesis.

Aristotle and the *Precepts* share the insights that ethical behavior is 1) crucially determined by the specific circumstances and 2) cannot be defined precisely. These positions are characteristic of Peripatetic ethics in general and thus can be found in other figures besides Aristotle. Pohlenz (1933: 71–2) cites, as a parallel for fragment 10 of the *Precepts*, a passage from Theophrastus quoted by Aulus Gellius in Latin translation (1.3.28 = fr. 534 FHSG). Theophrastus says that, in determining what duty calls us to do, certain factors attached to the situation (*aliae quasi appendices*) govern us. These factors take into account the persons, conditions, and occasions involved as well as the requirements of the particular case itself (*aliae quasi appendices personarum et causarum et temporum et circumstantiae ipsius necessitates*). He then emphasizes that it is difficult to reduce these factors to rules (*quas includere in praecepta difficilest*). Pohlenz suggests that the Greek terms used for persons, conditions and occasions were πρόσωπα, πράγματα and καῖρός. He argues that the connection between this passage of Theophrastus and

Aristoxenus is not limited to a general similarity in outlook but that a word-for-word agreement shows that Aristoxenus depended directly on Theophrastus. Apart from the likelihood that Theophrastus used the word *καίρως*, however, the similarity of the two passages is precisely at the general level and it is hard to see what Pohlenz means by the word-for-word agreement. He emphasizes the statement in Theophrastus that it is difficult to reduce the factors involved in the circumstances to rules (1933: 72, n. 1), which certainly agrees in general sentiment with the statement in the *Precepts* that the opportune is not teachable, but there is in fact no reference to rules here in the *Precepts*, so it is wrong to talk of word-for-word dependence. The only other specific verbal similarity that Pohlenz mentions is the suggestion that Aristoxenus' use of *συμπάρεσθαι* (to accompany) might be a reminiscence of whatever in Theophrastus' Greek lay behind *appendices* (attachments) in Gellius. The two words have the same general meaning but are again not closely enough connected to suggest that Aristoxenus must be dependent on Theophrastus. Thus, the *Precepts* do show the general similarity to Aristotle and Theophrastus mentioned in the first sentence of this paragraph, but the passages examined so far show no word-for-word similarity.

Beyond adopting the same general thesis, that our behavior varies crucially with the specifics of the situation, there are some similarities between Peripatetic texts and the *Precepts* in the way that the general thesis is developed. The Aristotelian discussion of the virtue which moderns have dubbed agreeableness but which for Aristotle had no name takes into account some of the same factors that the *Pythagorean Precepts* regard as crucial. Thus, Aristotle says that the agreeable man varies his relationships with others in terms of the status of the individual with whom he is dealing and uses the same word specified as one of the four key factors in the *Precepts*, *ἄξιωμα* (1126b36). We have already seen that in describing the virtue of agreeableness Aristotle describes its domain as *ἐν ταῖς ὁμιλίαις*, which is essentially the same as Aristoxenus' assertion that the sphere of appropriateness is *κατὰ τὰς ὁμιλίας*. The crucial difference is, however, that while Aristotle is talking of the specific and relatively minor virtue of agreeableness, the *Precepts* appear to be talking about proper behavior in general. There are further examples of similarity in development. As we have seen, the *Pythagorean Precepts* use anger as an example of something that is

appropriate under certain circumstances. Aristotle famously treats anger in a similar way, regarding it as a mean state, in that it is appropriate, if it occurs in the right circumstances, i.e. for the right reasons, against the right persons, in the right manner, at the right moment and for the right length of time (EN 1125b31–2). Wehrli (1967: 61) points to a passage in Cicero (*Tusc.* 4.19.43) as a parallel for the conditional recognition of the value of anger in the *Precepts*. Here the Peripatetics are reported to maintain that certain disorders that are sometimes thought harmful are in fact natural and serve a useful end. The example given is anger, which is called “the whetstone of bravery.” So the Peripatetics and the *Pythagorean Precepts* agree that in certain circumstances anger can be a valuable thing.

Some of the similarities mentioned are likely to be simply the result of similarity of subject matter. Thus, in discussing moral actions it is not at all surprising that both Aristotle and the *Precepts* should talk about *ὁμιλίας*, interactions with others. Moreover, if both Aristotle and the Pythagoreans decided that the determination of proper moral action depended on the specifics of the situation and the relationships between the people involved, then it is not very surprising, given the typical Greek fascination with glory and honor, that both of them should consider status (*ἄξιωμα*) one of the relevant factors. So both the Peripatetics and the *Precepts* adopt an ethics that crucially takes into account circumstances, but the specific systems are not the same. There is no precise parallel in the Peripatetic texts for the specific set of four factors that the *Precepts* regard as crucial in determining appropriate action (i.e. age, status, family relation and benefaction).

What is crucial in determining the relationship between the Peripatetics and the *Precepts* is not the general similarities noted above but rather the markedly different emphasis in the *Precepts* in comparison with Aristotle. There is no mention of the most famous Aristotelian formulation of the thesis that moral action depends on the circumstances: the doctrine of the mean. It is inconceivable that Aristoxenus should have completely overlooked this most distinctive of Aristotelian doctrines, if his goal were to glorify the Pythagoreans by presenting them as anticipating crucial Aristotelian theses. The doctrine of the mean would be a particularly plausible doctrine for Aristoxenus to assign to the Pythagoreans because of the well-attested interest in mathematical means by Pythagoreans such as Archytas (fr. 2). Yet there is nothing about the mean in the *Pythagorean*

Precepts. Moreover, the key concept in the *Precepts*, *καιρός*, which along with its cognates is used fourteen times in twenty-six lines in fragment 10, plays a minor role in Aristotle. As we have seen, Aristotle uses *καιρός* at *EN* 1104a9 to make the important point that there is no science of the mean. But it is not a thematic word in his presentation (*καιρός* appears just five other times in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, twice as the good in the category of time [1096a 27 and 32], twice in passing non-philosophical temporal uses [1108b7, 1160a28]. In only one other passage does it refer to something like “the appropriate” [1110a14]). Aristoxenus would hardly have hunted out this rare use of *καιρός* in Aristotle and then built an ethics around it, if his goal were to glorify the Pythagoreans as having anticipated Aristotle, since *καιρός* simply is not a central Aristotelian term.

The case is similar with Plato. As noted above he uses *καιρός* at *Philebus* 66a7, when he asserts that pleasure is not the first of possessions or even the second but rather nature has chosen “measure, the moderate and what is appropriate” (*μέτρον καὶ τὸ μέτριον καὶ καίριον*) as the most valuable possession (cf. *Statesman* 284e6, where there is a similar list – *τὸ μέτριον καὶ τὸ πρέπον καὶ τὸν καιρὸν καὶ τὸ δέον*). So “the appropriate” is one name that Plato uses for the highest of human possessions, but the fact that the word appears just this one time in the *Philebus* discussion shows precisely that it is not the central term for Plato, as it is in the *Precepts*, but is simply an alternate form of expression for more common terms such as *μέτριον*. *Καιρός* is a relatively common word in Greek literature as a whole and thus also occurs a number of other times in Plato, but most of these are simply passing uses meaning “opportunity” or “right time.” There are only two passages where Plato treats *καιρός* thematically and neither of these shows any close connection to the *Precepts*. Thus, in the *Republic* one of the advantages of the basic principle that each person should perform just one job is said to be that the person will be free to perform their work at “the opportune moment,” since they will have no distractions (*Resp.* 370b8–c4). This important Platonic point is not found in the *Precepts*. Again in the *Statesman* (306c–310e) Plato says that it is the role of the kingly art to distinguish the right and wrong time for action and that each of the two basic contrasting temperaments (acute/quick and gentle/slow) can be inappropriate and that accordingly marriages of contrasting temperaments should be encouraged. The *Precepts* make no mention of the kingly art or of these opposed temperaments.

Thus, there is no basis for supposing that the discussion of *καίριος* in the *Precepts* derives from Aristoxenus' reading of Aristotle or Plato. How are we, then, to make sense of the similarity between the Pythagoreans and the Peripatetics in emphasizing that our behavior varies with the specifics of the situation and that ethics is only teachable up to a point? The answer is that these views are not unique to Aristotle and the fourth-century Pythagoreans. They are found in other fifth- and fourth-century authors and belong to the context from which the Pythagoreans and Aristotle developed their views. As noted in the following section, Jaeger long ago pointed out that Aristotle's doctrine of the mean was heavily influenced by Greek medical thought (1957). More recent studies have confirmed and expanded Jaeger's point to show that both Plato and Aristotle developed their thinking about virtue and the role of a doctrine of the mean in the context of debates in medicine and in rhetoric about the nature of skill (Tracy 1969 and Hutchinson 1988). One of the characteristics of this medical context is precisely that the doctor must take into account the full complexity of the situation in treating his patient. He must consider the individual constitution of the patient, the age of the patient, the nature of foods, the amount and nature of exercise, the general climate where the patient lives, the season, etc. (see e.g., *Reg.* 3.67). The Pythagoreans are showing just the same sort of concern about the complexity of our interactions with others, where we must consider a wide variety of factors relating to those interacting, such as differences in age, status, family relationships and in benefits conferred. Aristotle similarly follows the pattern set by the medical writers in emphasizing that correct moral action requires taking into account the full complexity of the situation and he further follows them in emphasizing that precise knowledge is therefore not attainable in these areas (see e.g., *VM* 9 and Aristotle, *EN* 1104a3–10). It is perfectly plausible that, in addition to arising from the same context as Aristotle's thought on these issues, the *Precepts* formed part of the background for the development of Aristotle's ethics. Whatever Pythagorean influence there was on Aristotle, however, it was clearly taken in and radically refashioned in order to produce his own distinctive and innovative doctrine of the mean.

If we turn from the influence of the *Precepts* on later thinkers such as Aristotle back to their relation to the earlier Pythagorean ethical system embodied in the *acusmata*, a crucial point emerges. The *Precepts* reveal

an ethics that is not just a matter of simple rules that are to be memorized and followed. This is a significant break with the *acumata*, which appear to have been precisely such rules. The *Precepts* instead present an ethical system that calls for a complex analysis of the specific circumstances under which moral agents act and which, while still highly structured, recognizes that ethics cannot be reduced to an exact science. This introduces a puzzle for which no clear answer readily appears: what accounts for this development in the nature of Pythagorean ethics?

Aristotle's Theory of the Mean, The *Pythagorean Precepts* and *καίρως* in the Medical Tradition

As mentioned above, Jaeger argued that Aristotle's theory of the mean may have developed in the setting of a comparison between morality and medicine (1957). If Aristotle's recognition that ethical action depends crucially on the circumstances arose in part from influence of medical treatises, is it possible that the Pythagorean conception of *καίρως* in ethics developed under the influence of medicine as well? First, what is the evidence for Aristotle? In a number of places, Aristotle uses medical knowledge as a model for a type of knowledge that depends heavily on the circumstances and that cannot be precisely defined. The doctor must take account of the specific circumstances of the patient and cannot simply apply one universal, clearly defined cure to all people. This comparison with medicine appears in the central passage on the nature of ethics at *EN* 1104a3–10: "Matters that have to do with conduct and what is advantageous have nothing fixed in them, just as is the case with matters of health." What follows is the passage discussed above in which Aristotle appeals to the concept of *καίρως* in saying that in particular cases of conduct "the agents themselves must in each case consider what is appropriate to the circumstances" (τὰ πρὸς τὸν καίρῳ). At this point he adds again that this is just as is the case in medicine, although he adds navigation as another parallel case. Plato preceded Aristotle in making use of the analogy with medical knowledge but, as Jaeger argues, Aristotle understood medical knowledge differently than Plato and in fact uses the analogy against his teacher to show that morality is not something that can be defined with mathematical precision, and only admits of the sort of precision that doctors are able to achieve in medicine. Jaeger points to Chapter 9 of *On Ancient Medicine* as a crucial

parallel for the point Aristotle develops about the lack of exactness in ethics (1957). The Hippocratic treatise does indeed argue that in medicine there is no exact measure that can be found with reference to which exact knowledge could be derived. Bodily feeling is the only measure that can be used in medicine and it does not admit of exactness. Although the key term *καίρως* is missing in Chapter 9, the parallel in general approach between *On Ancient Medicine* and Aristotle's frequent appeal to the analogy between ethical and medical knowledge make a strong case for Jaeger's thesis.

The connection between the Hippocratic writings and the *Pythagorean Precepts* appears in some respects closer and in some respects more distant than the connection between Aristotle and the Hippocratic writings. What is crucially missing from the *Precepts* is any attempt to draw a direct parallel between medical knowledge and ethical knowledge, such as we find repeatedly in Aristotle. It is true that the Pythagorean tradition has connections to Greek medicine. Croton, where Pythagoras was active, was an early center of Greek medicine and figures such as Alcmaeon of Croton, who is sometimes mistakenly regarded as a Pythagorean, are likely to have been known to early Pythagoreans. Indeed, Philolaus, in the second half of the fifth century developed medical theories concerning disease and the constitution of the human body as part of his general account of the cosmos (Huffman 1993: 289–306). There is, however, nothing in Philolaus that suggests direct influence from medicine on ethics. Thus, we can suppose that individual Pythagoreans were from the earliest period of the school familiar with Greek medical texts but we have no direct evidence for their adoption of medical knowledge as a model. On the other hand, the *Pythagorean Precepts* are not completely devoid of reference to Greek medicine. In fragment 9 (Iambl. VP 208), as part of a discussion of desire and the complex variety of human desires, the *Precepts* emphasize that all foods and drinks have an affect on the body, and that it requires great wisdom to see what sort of and how many foods should be used for nourishment. Thus medical concerns tied to diet played a significant part in the way of life outlined in the *Precepts*, but there is no direct parallel drawn between the sort of knowledge involved in dietetics and that involved in our interactions with other people. It is also important to note that the key term *καίρως* does not appear in the discussion of dietetics in fragment 9 as it does in the discussion of interaction with others here in fragment 10.

On the other hand, the concept of *καιρός* does play a relatively large role in Hippocratic medicine as a whole and is the central concept in fragment 10 of the *Precepts*, while it is only mentioned prominently in one passage of Aristotle. Thus the usage of *καιρός* is the strongest tie between the *Precepts* and the Hippocratic corpus. In the Hippocratic corpus, *καιρός* is used in two prominent ways. First, it refers to the right moment or opportunity at which medical action must be taken. This usage is particularly clear in *Diseases* 1.5, where the author distinguishes between acute appropriate times, e.g., when the patient is losing consciousness or choking, and other types of appropriate times such as when a disease calls for treatment early in the day or once a day. The same temporal usage is found in the famous first *Precept*: "Time is that in which there is a *καιρός* ('appropriate time' or 'opportunity') but an appropriate time is that in which there is not much time." On the other hand, other passages clearly treat *καιρός* as "appropriate measure" with no reference to time. *Places in Man* 44 makes the determination of the "appropriate measure" central to health, where the appropriate measure is providing as much food as the body will be able to master. In *Affections* 50 the two uses appear side by side in the assertion that diseases and deaths will arise "whenever [food and drink] are taken at an inappropriate time (*μὴ ἐν τῷ καιρῷ*) or in amounts more than the appropriate measure" (*πλείωσι τοῦ καιροῦ*).

In trying to develop an explanation as to how Pythagorean ethics moved from the hard and fast rules of the *acusmata* to the careful consideration of what is appropriate in the circumstances, found in the *Precepts*, it is plausible that a familiarity with the medical texts on *καιρός* discussed above played a role, and indeed such a connection might explain the prominence of the concept of *καιρός* in the *Precepts*. Nonetheless, it is not possible to go further than this judgment of plausibility. The *Precepts* do show an interest in dietetics but *καιρός* is not used in this context and the concept of *καιρός* was available in the broader Greek intellectual tradition and not unique to the medical writers. Indeed, the concept of *καιρός* was important in the Pythagorean tradition itself considerably before the fourth-century date of the *Precepts*, so it is not likely to appear in the *Precepts* simply because of Hippocratic influence. We need now to turn to the appearance of the term in the earlier Pythagorean tradition, but in order to understand what is early and what is late in the Pythagorean usage of *καιρός* it is necessary to start

with the fullest discussion of the concept in the philosophical tradition, that of Proclus in the fifth century AD.

Καίρὸς in the Philosophical Tradition in General and the Pythagorean Tradition in Particular

The only detailed philosophical treatment of *καίρὸς* is found some 800 years later than the *Pythagorean Precepts*, in the Neoplatonist Proclus' commentary on the *First Alcibiades* (120.14–124.22). The *First Alcibiades* was attributed to Plato in antiquity, although most modern scholars think that a member of Plato's school wrote it shortly after his death. Proclus' treatment reveals the full development of the term in later Greek philosophy and also refers to Pythagorean usage of the term, so it is profitable to examine what Proclus says and work back from it to the early Pythagorean view and then forward again to the view found in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. The term *καίρὸς* does not actually occur in the *First Alcibiades*. Proclus introduces it as part of the commentary on a remark by Alcibiades. Alcibiades remarks that Socrates' offer to explain why he pursues him has "just forestalled" his (i.e. Alcibiades') asking why Socrates keeps pestering him (Pl. *Alc.* 1 104d). Proclus' emphasis is clearly on the temporal sense of *καίρὸς* as "the right time." The fact that Socrates' "just forestalls" Alcibiades, i.e. answers his question before he can ask it, shows that it is the right time for Socrates and Alcibiades to have this discussion. Proclus comments that learning handed on at the right time (*κατὰ καίρον*) provides many times greater benefit (*in Alc.* 120.16–121.1). He continues by pointing out that certain portions of time are suited to different activities. He then connects these appropriate times to cycles of fruitfulness and sterility in the universe (121.13–16), in a clear allusion to the nuptial number of *Republic* 8 (546a–b), which governs proper births and which the guardians fail to grasp, leading to the inevitable decline of the ideal state. Proclus continues that there is a twofold potency involved (122.8): the potency of the agent and the potency of the recipient. The agent, in this case the teacher Socrates, must be ready to act and the recipient, his pupil Alcibiades, to receive. The right moment for these two potencies to meet and be actualized is governed by a spirit, evidently Socrates' famous *daimonion*, who brings them together (124.5–7). Proclus' final touch is to quote *Laws* 709b, where Plato asserts that "God governs all human things and, with god,

chance (τύχη) and due measure (καιρός)” (124.10–11). Proclus’ interpretation is thus developed in light of Aristotelian ideas of actuality and potentiality and in light of Plato’s elevation of καιρός to an important principle of due measure, in his late dialogues. Proclus also mentions the Pythagoreans, however. He asserts “the Pythagoreans called the first cause, from which the good arises for all, καιρός, since it grants completeness to all things” (*in Alc.* 121.18–20). This understanding of καιρός as a first principle has some similarity to the late Platonic conception and might be a typical example of late Platonism being read back into Pythagoreanism. But, before drawing this conclusion, it is necessary to ask what evidence there is for the concept of καιρός in early Pythagoreanism.

It is indeed clear that καιρός did play a role in early Pythagoreanism, but it does not appear to be the same role as Proclus supposes it to play for the Pythagoreans. Aristotle is one of our best sources for early Pythagoreanism and he reports that fifth-century Pythagoreans attempted to define καιρός in terms of numbers. Aristotle famously says in the *Metaphysics* that the Pythagoreans saw more similarities between numbers and what is and comes to be than between elements such as earth and fire and these things. He then gives as examples that one sort of number was justice, another soul and mind and another καιρός (985b30). Later at 1078b23, in a brief aside about the extent to which the early Greek philosophers had developed definitions, he mentions that the Pythagoreans had defined a few things, whose accounts they connected to numbers. Three examples are given: justice, marriage and καιρός. Neither in these passages nor anywhere else in his extant works does Aristotle explain what specific number was used to define καιρός. Alexander, however, in his commentary on the first passage from the *Metaphysics* and evidently relying on Aristotle’s lost treatise on the Pythagoreans, reports “the Pythagoreans said that the number seven is καιρός, for natural things seem to have their seasons of completion, both of birth and maturity according to [periods of] seven” (*in Metaph.* 38.17–18 = Arist. fr. 203 R³, tr. Dooley). As evidence, the Pythagoreans cited the supposed fact that humans were born after seven months, cut their first teeth at the age of seven months, reached puberty after twice seven years etc. Moreover, according to Alexander, Aristotle reported that the Pythagoreans said that the sun occupied the seventh position counting from the periphery (after the stars and five known planets),

because it is the cause of the seasons and thus is appropriately connected to the number seven, which defines “due season” (καίρος). This is a clear allusion to Philolaus’ astronomical system in which the sun has just this position (Huffman 1993: 231–88), so that the association of the number seven with καίρος should be ascribed to Philolaus. He is likely to have been the first to associate the sun with the number seven, since he is the first to give the sun this position in the cosmic order. He is thus probably responsible for the other connections between the number seven and human development, but they could have been developed earlier in the tradition. The use of καίρος both in connection to the sun and the seasons and also in connection to critical points in human development clearly indicates that the concept is primarily temporal, and thus should be translated as “due season” or “the right time.”

Another passage in Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* (990a18), and Alexander’s commentary on that passage (*in Metaph.* 74.6–75.21), show that the Pythagoreans assigned a specific place in the cosmos to καίρος as well as to other concepts such as opinion and injustice (Huffman 1993: 283–8). Alexander reports that the Pythagoreans assigned καίρος to the place that the number seven occupies in the universe. Alexander’s earlier report, cited above, associated the number seven with the sun, so that it would appear that the Pythagoreans thought that “due season” was located in the same region as the sun. This all would make at least some sense, if the Pythagoreans thought that the sun was responsible for “due season” in the cosmos by producing the seasons on earth and perhaps through them the patterns of seven that govern crucial times in human development such as birth and the onset of puberty.

There are some significant points of contact with this Philolaic conception of “due season” and the concept that Proclus assigns to the Pythagoreans but also an important difference. Both accounts emphasize the connection between καίρος and completion. Aristotle’s account stresses that natural things reach “seasons of completion” (τοὺς τελείους καιροὺς) according to periods of seven (fr. 203 = Alex. *in Metaph.* 38.17), while Proclus reports that καίρος “grants completeness to all things” (*in Alc.* 121.19–20). On the other hand, for Proclus’ Pythagoreans καίρος is “the first principle from which the good arises for all” (*in Alc.* 121.18–20), whereas for Philolaus καίρος is important but is clearly not the first principle but just one among many principles. For example,

Aristotle reports that Justice was an important principle associated with the number four (fr. 203). Moreover, in Philolaus' system, the number one is associated with the central fire (fr. 7, cf. Alex. *in Metaph.* 74.12), so that in Philolaus' cosmology it would appear that the central fire was the first cause rather than the sun. Indeed, in Philolaus' metaphysical system the first principles are limiters, unlimiteds and harmony rather than καῖρός (frs. 1 and 6).

It may well be, however, that Philolaus' conception of καῖρός provided the stimulus to Plato's famous nuptial number in the *Republic*, which "determines better and worse births" (546c–d). Proclus seems to see a connection, since he alludes to the nuptial number immediately before discussing the Pythagorean conception of καῖρός (*in Alc.* 121.13–20). Philolaus and Plato agree in thinking that a number governs proper births. On the other hand, Plato's elaborate description of the nuptial number shows that it is something more complicated than simply the number seven, so that he is developing an earlier idea of Philolaus for his own purposes. Plato and Philolaus do agree, however, that this number is not the good and is only one of many principles.

Where then did Proclus get the idea that καῖρός was the first principle for the Pythagoreans? He may have drawn on some source not available to us, but in the surviving evidence there is a passage in the later tradition which can very plausibly be supposed to have inspired Proclus' statement. In his purported speech to the thousand members of the council in Croton, which is reported in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, Pythagoras "advised them to reject laziness in their actions. For, there is no other good than the right time in each action" (Iambl. *VP* 49). At first sight it might not be clear what laziness has to do with καῖρός. The connection can be made if the point is that vigilance rather than an apathetic laziness is required, if we are to determine the right time for each action (De Vogel 1966: 113–14). The connection to laziness thus suggests that καῖρός has the meaning "right time" rather than the broader "due measure" in this passage. The significance of the passage for Proclus' report is that in both cases καῖρός is recognized as the pre-eminent good. In Iamblichus, καῖρός is identified as "the good" in each action just as in Proclus it is identified as "the first cause from which good arises for all." The four speeches supposedly delivered by Pythagoras in Croton of which this passage in Iamblichus is part are not evidence for early Pythagoreanism, however, but are later

compositions dating to the third century BC or later (see below in the section on *καίρος* in rhetoric). Thus, the doctrine of *καίρος* assigned to the Pythagoreans by Proclus appears to be an amalgam of early Pythagorean views going back to Philolaus and reported by Alexander, drawing on Aristotle's lost work on the Pythagoreans, and views of the Hellenistic period that are projected back onto Pythagoras.

If we turn, with this background, to the *Pythagorean Precepts*, it appears that the concept of *καίρος* here is closer to the more limited role assigned to it in early Pythagoreanism. It is one among a number of concepts deployed to account for the good life, but it is not presented as the fundamental principle that explains all good in the world. On the other hand, it differs from the concept in Philolaus and early Pythagoreanism, since it is not employed as a cosmic principle nor associated with number, although the lack of a cosmic application could just be the result of the *Precepts*' focus on ethics rather than cosmology. More importantly, while it was strictly a temporal principle in Philolaus, in the *Precepts*, it is a broader notion of appropriateness. Again, Philolaus appears to have thought that it could be defined with mathematical precision in terms of the number seven. In the *Precepts*, on the contrary, there is a recognition that *καίρος* only admits of loose definition. Fragment 10 explicitly asserts that it is only teachable up to a point and it would seem to follow that it is only definable up to a point as well. It is also emphasized that what is appropriate is complex and has many forms. Thus, it would appear that the conception of *καίρος* has gone through a considerable development from Philolaus to the *Precepts*. Again it is interesting to ask what led to this change in Pythagoreanism regarding the concept of *καίρος*. Could it have occurred under the influence of the development of the concept of *καίρος* in yet another area?

Καίρος and Rhetoric

Rostagni argued that there is a connection between the concept of *καίρος* in Pythagoreanism and the role that *καίρος* plays in the rhetorical theory of Gorgias (Rostagni 1922). He suggested that Gorgias' ideas about the ability of language to influence the soul go back to his teacher Empedocles (DK 82A2) and ultimately to Empedocles' teacher Pythagoras. Gorgias

drew the rhetorical concept of *καιρός*, seen in the ability of the orator to adapt his discourse to all circumstances, which include the proper time and place as well as the disposition of the soul of the speaker and listener, from Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans. Pythagoras thus turns out to be the founder of the art of rhetoric. Rostagni's case is purely circumstantial, however, and we know too little both about Gorgias and about Pythagoras to draw any such conclusion.

It is certainly likely that Gorgias was concerned with the concept of *καιρός* in rhetoric, since Dionysius of Halicarnassus reports that Gorgias was "the first to attempt to write about *καιρός*," although he adds that "he wrote nothing worthy of mention about it" (*De comp. verb.* 12 = DK 82B13). We do not have any of Gorgias' explicit assertions on the topic but it is reasonable to suppose that his point was that the structure, mode of argument and style of a speech must be adapted to its occasion (*καιρός*), i.e. to the time, the place, the audience etc. (Kennedy 1963: 66–9; Guthrie 1969: 272). Plato assigns the study of *καιρός* an important role in rhetoric in a passage of the *Phaedrus* (272a). The true rhetorician must first know what sort of speech influences what sort of man and recognize what sort of man is before him. The final stage is to add knowledge of the appropriate times (*καιρούς*) for speaking and for remaining silent and to distinguish the favorable occasions (*εὐκαιρίαν*) and unfavorable occasions (*ἄκαιρίαν*) for brief speech, pitiable speech and all the other sorts of speech that he has learned. Aristotle too refers to the appropriate (*εὐκαιρώς*) and inappropriate (*μὴ εὐκαιρώς*) use of rhetorical devices (*Rh.* 1408b1). It is plausible that passages in Plato and Aristotle are later developments of basic points that Gorgias first developed and thus give us some idea of what Gorgias' theory may have been like.

Evidence for the supposed Pythagorean origin of this rhetorical doctrine is found in the tradition that Pythagoras adapted his speeches to the occasion, when he delivered four different speeches to four different audiences upon his arrival in Croton. This evidence is problematic, however. There is relatively early evidence for the tradition that he delivered four speeches. Dicaearchus reports that, after his talk to the elders of Croton, he made a speech appropriate to their age to the young men at the invitation of the rulers of the city. This speech was followed by two more, one to the children and one to the women (Porph. *VP* 18). Even earlier, Antisthenes, an associate of Socrates, reported that

Pythagoras was said to have made speeches appropriate to children to the children, and similarly for the women, rulers and young men (fr. 187 Giannantoni 1990). So there is no reason to doubt the basic fact that Pythagoras gave different speeches to different audiences upon his arrival in Croton. However, the idea that one speaks differently to children than to adults is common sense and need suppose no developed rhetorical doctrine. No one would give the same presentation to young children that was given to the members of the council. Nor is there any evidence connecting Pythagoras with the term *καίριος*. There is also no evidence that Pythagoras passed on a rhetorical doctrine to Empedocles.

Iamblichus does preserve four speeches of Pythagoras to the different groups in Croton in his *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, and we might suppose that these are evidence for Pythagoras' rhetorical theory. However, it is very unlikely that these are anything like the actual speeches that Pythagoras delivered. Although Dicaearchus refers to the tradition of the four speeches, he also says that little is known of what Pythagoras said to his associates (Porph. VP 19). This assertion would be nonsense, if he had the four relatively detailed speeches preserved for us by Iamblichus in front of him (Burkert 1972: 114, n. 38). Similarly Antisthenes gives no indication that he had actually seen the speeches. Indeed, his way of referring to the tradition of the four speeches clearly suggests that he had not and was instead relying on a second-hand account. His report begins "Pythagoras is said (Πυθαγόρας λέγεται) to have made speeches suited to children to the children," rather than something like "In his four speeches Pythagoras makes the speech to children appropriate to children." Aristotle also nowhere shows awareness of the four speeches, which would be surprising if they were in existence. De Vogel's argument that the speeches were known at the beginning of the fourth century but recognized as productions not of Pythagoras but of the school in the fifth century and hence forgotten by the time of Aristotle is very implausible. Aristotle did considerable research on the Pythagoreans and wrote two books on them, so it is unlikely that he would have overlooked something as important as the four speeches, whatever their quality (De Vogel 1966: 227). It is thus overwhelmingly likely that the speeches preserved in Iamblichus were written after the time of Dicaearchus, i.e. after 300 BC. Thus, they are not evidence for the rhetorical theory of Pythagoras.

So the similarity between Gorgias and Pythagoras is thus that both seem to have taken into account the nature of the audience in delivering a speech. It is important to note, however, that while Gorgias evidently identified the specifically rhetorical concept of *καίρὸς* and made it a special topic of discussion, there is no evidence that Pythagoras did so. The word *καίρὸς* does not appear in the reports about the speeches of Pythagoras, so that it is not at all clear that he used it in this context. Certainly the ancient rhetorical tradition does not assign the concept to Pythagoras; as we have seen, Dionysius of Halicarnassus says that Gorgias was the first to speak about it. It is true, as has been discussed above, that a concept of *καίρὸς* does appear in Aristotle's account of fifth-century Pythagoreanism, but there it is a cosmological concept associated with the sun and there is no hint of its application in other areas. Apart from the tradition of the four speeches, the early evidence for Pythagoras does not connect him either to *καίρὸς* or to rhetoric.

Three other pieces of evidence that have sometimes been cited to show Pythagoras' connection to rhetoric do not in fact do so. First, one of the *acusmata* says that, after number, the second wisest thing is "the person who assigned names to things" (Ael. *VH* 4.17; Iambl. *VP* 82), but this emphasis on the power of names in no way requires a rhetorical theory let alone a theory of *καίρὸς*. Second, the report in Diogenes Laertius that "the greatest thing in human affairs is to persuade the soul to good or evil" (8.32), which might suggest a strong interest in persuasive rhetoric, derives from Alexander Polyhistor, whose account of Pythagoreanism has been shown to be a later fabrication and not based on early evidence (Burkert 1972: 53). Finally, in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, Iamblichus reports "rhetorical skills and epideictic speeches and laws written by them [the Pythagoreans] were brought into Greece [sc. from Italy]" (*VP* 166). This report, however, does not appear to be based on any early source and has all the characteristics of the later tradition, which was out to glorify Pythagoras at all costs, since it makes Pythagoras responsible for the flourishing in Italy of most areas of cultural achievement, including not just philosophers and rhetoricians but also poets and lawgivers. Thus, these three pieces of evidence do nothing to connect Pythagoras to rhetorical theory.

The use of *καίρὸς* here in fragment 10 of the *Pythagorean Precepts* is the closest any text in the Pythagorean tradition gets to the rhetorical

concept. Even here it is important to recognize that *καίριος* is not in fact used as a rhetorical concept *per se*. It is instead an ethical principle governing conduct. The discussion is in terms of emotional response to other people and in particular the extent to which it is appropriate to get angry with them. In lines 19–20 there is a reference to how frank we should be in our speech to others, depending on their age, rank and relation to us, but nowhere in the fragment is there a discussion of specifically rhetorical strategies. Fragment 10 is thus concerned not with the construction of speeches but rather with how we conduct ourselves in relation to others.

The recognition that our behavior to others must take into account the circumstances and in particular the precise nature of our relation to the other person, shows connections to the clear Pythagorean interest in classifying different groups of people and adjusting the education and training of an individual in accordance with the group to which he or she belongs. One indication of this is the famous split between *acusmatici* and *mathematici* (Burkert 1972: 192–208), which probably occurred in the fifth century, but it can also be seen in the *Pythagorean Precepts* in the differing activities specified for different age groups in fragment 2. Indeed, it is in terms of Pythagorean pedagogy and training that the tradition about Pythagoras' four speeches fits best. The overall point of that story is to stress the impact that Pythagoras had upon his arrival at Croton. He so impressed the members of the council to whom he spoke first that they had him talk to their young men, children and women. The emphasis on different presentations for different groups does agree well with the emphasis on different activities and pedagogical techniques for different groups attested elsewhere in the early evidence for Pythagoreanism. Connections between this pedagogical principle and the rhetorical principle of *καίριος* are easy to see, but nonetheless it is not in itself a rhetorical principle of the sort we find in Gorgias.

The question then is whether either the Pythagorean cosmological concept of *καίριος* or the Pythagorean pedagogical principle described above are likely to be the origin of Gorgias' rhetorical theory of *καίριος*. No ancient source makes any connection between Gorgias and Pythagoreanism. One can try to construct such a connection out of three pieces of evidence: 1) that Gorgias was a pupil of Empedocles (DK 82A2), 2) that according to Aristotle Empedocles founded rhetoric (Diog. Laert. 8.57) and 3) that Empedocles' doctrine of transmigration

has obvious affinities with Pythagoreanism. Even if we accept each of these three pieces of evidence as true, we would have to make additional assumptions that are by no means certain, e.g., that in addition to the doctrine of metempsychosis Empedocles also borrowed a rhetorical doctrine that is otherwise not attested for Pythagoras. Nor is there anything about what we know of Gorgias' theory of καιρός that indicates its origin in a cosmological or pedagogical setting, which would be expected if it arose from Pythagorean soil. The other option is to assume that Gorgias' theory was his own original development of the general Greek tradition concerning the value of observing καιρός, which is described above and found in authors such as Hesiod (*Works and Days* 694). This general concept of καιρός is in a number of cases specifically associated with speech. Thus, one common way of praising a speech made by someone was to describe it as ἐς καιρόν (opportune, appropriate – e.g., Hdt. 9.87). In the absence of any clear external or internal evidence for a specific connection to Pythagoreanism, it is more reasonable to suppose that Gorgias developed this common Greek idea of a speech that was opportune into a detailed rhetorical concept than to suppose a uniquely Pythagorean origin.

Another possible connection between fragment 10 and the rhetorical conception of καιρός has been thought to be the emphasis on the impossibility of reducing it to a completely rational and teachable art. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in the passage where he mentions Gorgias as the first to try to write about καιρός, comments that by nature the subject cannot be turned into a science but is a matter of judgment (*De comp. verb.* 12). Isocrates points out that while the proper order of letters in forming a word may be susceptible to hard and fast rules, the opposite is true of discourse. Good discourse requires attention to the occasion (τῶν καιρῶν), to propriety (τοῦ πρεπόντως . . . ἔχειν) and to originality, while good spelling pays attention to none of these and just follows the rules (*Against the Sophists* 12–13). Plato makes the same point in criticism of Gorgias in the dialogue of that name (463b). Rhetoric is described as a knack and a matter of experience (ἐμπειρία καὶ τριβή) rather than a craft that has rational rules (τέχνη). In the passage of Isocrates mentioned above, καιρός is mentioned along with τὸ πρέπον (“the fitting”), and “the two together constitute what may be called the artistic element in rhetorical theory as opposed to the prescribed rules” (Kennedy 1963: 67). Fragment 10 clearly shows some similarity to these ideas in so

far as it recognizes in line 29 that “what is appropriate” is only teachable up to a point.

Some scholars have found this “irrationality” in the concept of *καίρως* un-Pythagorean and argue that, while the discussion in the first part of the fragment up to section 182 in Iamblichus reflects early Pythagorean ideas, this material in section 182 is a later addition (De Vogel 1966: 117). Section 182 cannot be so easily separated from the discussion of *καίρως* that precedes it, however, and is, in fact, a natural development of what has come before. At the beginning of section 180 appropriateness is evaluated in terms of four factors. In section 181, the Pythagoreans appear to recognize that the application of these factors is not simple, since the practice of what is appropriate is described as complex and as having many forms. Given this complexity it is perfectly natural that they then go on in section 182 to assert that appropriateness is only teachable up to a point. Thus, the development of the argument in the passage provides no reason to suspect that section 182 is an addition by Iamblichus.

Iamblichus’ typical intervention in and expansion of the text does make it difficult to see the exact point that the Pythagoreans wanted to make about the teachability of appropriateness. If we assign to the Pythagoreans not just the assertion that “up to a point what is appropriate is teachable” but also the statement that “these characteristics do not apply to it universally and without qualification,” then the emphasis falls on its not being teachable. It seems likely, however, that the second assertion was added by Iamblichus in his expansive mode, since it refers to plural characteristics, which thus looks back not just to “teachable” but also to the adjectives “not without method and admits of systematic treatment,” which are late and surely additions by Iamblichus (see the detailed commentary). If just the assertion that appropriateness is teachable up to a point belongs to the Pythagoreans then the emphasis may be rather on the teachability of appropriateness: “it is teachable up to a point.” That the emphasis is on teachability is supported by the fact that what immediately follows is not an explanation of why it is not teachable such as we find in the passage from Isocrates given above, but rather a list of three characteristics that accompany appropriateness (the timely, the suitable and the fitting). The inclusion of these characteristics only makes sense as an attempt to further define and hence make teachable the concept of appropriateness. Thus, the Pythagorean

treatment of καῖρός in this passage has a different emphasis than the treatment of it in the rhetorical tradition.

Καῖρός: Conclusion

The discussions of καῖρός in the medical, philosophical and rhetorical traditions provided above show that the use of καῖρός as a central ethical concept in fragment 10 did not arise directly from the earlier Pythagorean tradition. There is no good reason to believe that Pythagoras had already developed it as a rhetorical concept, nor is there evidence that its role as a cosmological concept in Philolaus was decisive for its importance in the *Precepts*. It is quite likely that its use in Greek medicine and Gorgias' development of the concept in rhetoric had some impact on what is found in the *Precepts*, but there is no specific evidence for that influence. On the other hand, as has been argued above, there is no reason to think that the treatment of καῖρός in the *Precepts* was an invention of Aristoxenus based on Aristotle. Instead, the *Precepts*' appeal to the concept of καῖρός appears to be a distinctively Pythagorean development of broader trends in fourth-century thought, which emphasized the importance of the specific circumstances in making moral decisions. These trends resulted from a variety of influences, including the developments in medicine and rhetoric outlined above. They also undoubtedly arose from ideas developed in what is commonly called the sophistic movement in the later part of the fifth century. The odd anonymous treatise known as the *Dissoi Logoi*, which dates to around 400, argues for moral relativism and one of the forms that its argument takes is to suggest that any universal moral claim that takes no account of the circumstances and simply asserts that x is always wrong is false. Barnes has argued that in emphasizing the inevitable lack of precision in ethics, Aristotle is adopting a similar position (1982: 519–22). The *Pythagorean Precepts* thus arise in a world conditioned by sophistic relativism as well as the rhetorical and medical emphasis on the importance of the circumstances in persuasion and medical treatment. Certain features of the Pythagorean tradition suggest that it would have been particularly susceptible to the influences from medicine and rhetoric. Pythagorean pedagogical technique as evidenced by the *Precepts* themselves but going back to Pythagoras broke human life

and potential learners into distinct groups and this will inevitably have suggested that rhetoricians like Gorgias were right in their development of a doctrine of *καίρως* according to which appropriate speech had to be determined by the context rather than hard and fast rules. Similarly the Pythagoreans were closely connected to the medical tradition from the beginning as can be seen from Philolaus' medical theories. Moreover, the *Precepts* themselves emphasize that each individual food creates a distinct state in the body and hence that our behavior is very much determined by the specific circumstances of our action. For these reasons the development in Pythagoreanism from the simple and rigid rules of the *acusmata* to the much more flexible *Precepts* is understandable. However, this development should not be overstated. The Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* recognize the importance of the specific circumstances in determining moral decisions but still accept that some actions will always be wrong, e.g., expressing anger towards one's elders, and try to be as specific as possible in defining the factors which determine which actions are appropriate in a given situation. As a result these Pythagoreans must give up on the universal moral rules of the earlier Pythagorean *acusmata*, e.g., that one must always put the right shoe on first, but they do not totally give up on the possibility of teaching what is appropriate and argue that it is teachable up to a point. Morality is now much more complicated than it was in the earlier Pythagorean tradition, but the very title *Precepts* and the numerous assertions of what must be done show that the Pythagoreans did not give up on a morality that was highly prescriptive.

Section 2 – Lines 36–56: Overview of the Argument

This section of the *Precepts* focuses on the concept of an ἀρχή, “starting point” or “first principle.” This concept plays a crucial role in Greek philosophy as a whole, notably in Aristotle's account of Presocratic philosophy in Book 1 of the *Metaphysics* (e.g., 982a1–3; see also Book 5, 1012b34–1013a23, and *EN* 1098a33–b8) and in the central books of Plato's *Republic* (e.g., 510b). Yet, as important as it is elsewhere, it seems to have played a particularly prominent role in Pythagorean thought, especially in the fragments of Philolaus, so that a clear connection can be seen here between the *Precepts* and the earlier Pythagorean tradition. The most striking feature of the text, however, is its bold

attempt to identify a universal concept of a starting point which applies across all aspects of the natural world and human endeavor. As a result, this is one of the few texts in the *Precepts* where it is possible to see a tie between Pythagorean science and Pythagorean ethics. Aristoxenus here ascribes to the Pythagoreans the view that the starting points or first principles of the mathematical sciences and of practices such as medicine have important analogues not only in biological generation but also in the interaction of human beings in societal structures, such as the family, the city-state and the military.

Aristoxenus starts by saying “they declared that in everything an ἀρχή is something of highest value.” A Greek reader would initially understand ἀρχή in its most common sense as “a beginning,” although the second common meaning of “political power” or “rule” would also come to mind. The notion that a beginning of any enterprise is crucial is, of course, a commonplace both in the Greek tradition and in the modern world. There is, nonetheless, quite possibly a specific connection to the earlier Pythagorean tradition and even to Pythagoras himself. In section 162 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, Iamblichus ascribes to Pythagoras himself the apothegm, “beginning is half of the whole” (ἀρχὴ δέ τοι ἥμισυ παντός), which is equivalent to the English maxim “well begun is half done.”

There can be no question of supposing that Pythagoras was the first to formulate this apothegm. It surely belonged to time-honored tradition even in his day. Certainly, when it is used by both Plato and Aristotle in the fourth century, they treat it as a common proverb and mention no special connection to Pythagoras. Thus, in the *Laws*, Plato says that the men who first set the rules for selection of magistrates in the state must be the very best of men and, in support of this proposition, adds the proverb, in just the form that is ascribed to Pythagoras by Iamblichus, “beginning is half of the whole” (753e). Plato then adds “for all praise that which has been well begun” and corrects the proverb by saying that he thinks the beginning is *more* than half. Finally, he comments that no one has ever given sufficient praise to the beginning that has been well made. This last remark would not be impossible but would be at least a little surprising, if Pythagoras had made the proverb a central point in his philosophy. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle may be picking up on the *Laws* passage, since he says, “the beginning seems to be more

than half of the whole" (1098b6–7). In this case, however, Aristotle is adapting the proverb, since he is not talking about a literal beginning but rather about the first principle of his ethical system, i.e. that happiness is the good for man. He is making a sort of pun in asserting not that an *arche* in the sense of a beginning is more than half of the whole but that an *arche* in the sense of a first principle is more than half of the whole. So both Plato and Aristotle, while themselves emphasizing the importance of the idea contained in the proverb and developing it, give no indication that it was particularly connected to Pythagoras. The same is true of Antiphon, who, without explicit allusion to the proverb or Pythagoras, says "Whenever someone makes a correct beginning of whatever action, it is reasonable that the end also turns out well" (fr. 60 DK = Stob. *Ecl.* 2.31.39).

It remains possible, nonetheless, that Pythagoras highlighted the proverb just as Plato and Aristotle do, even if no report prior to that of Iamblichus has survived which associates this apothegm with him. Certainly this sort of maxim would fit well in the company of the early orally preserved maxims that governed the Pythagorean life and that were known as *acusmata*. If it were certain that Pythagoras was particularly fond of this maxim, then it would be possible to trace the development of the idea throughout early Pythagoreanism, from its obscure origins with Pythagoras himself to the fragments of Philolaus and finally to the *Pythagorean Precepts*.

The second stage in its development is much clearer. There can be no doubt that the concept of a starting point or first principle was central to the philosophy of Philolaus (Huffman 1993: 78–92). It appears that Philolaus tried to identify, in each domain of enquiry, the minimum number of basic principles that was necessary to explain the phenomena in that domain. Thus, in order to explain the cosmos as a whole he first posited two basic principles, which he explicitly calls ἀρχαί (fr. 6), limiters and unlimiteds. The first line of his book asserts that the cosmos as a whole and everything in it was fitted together out of limiters and unlimiteds (fr. 1). In fragment 6, he will go on to explicitly add a third principle, which is already implicit in fragment 1, *harmonia* or "fitting together." Limiters, unlimiteds, and *harmonia* are thus the three principles that must be assumed in order to explain the cosmos as a whole: we must appeal to structural principles, to continua such as space, time and matter and to specific numerical relationships according to which the

structural principles are embodied in the continua. Philolaus, however, does not rest content with specifying this general set of first principles but goes on to identify separate sets of first principles for different domains of enquiry. Thus, in the case of disease, three explanatory principles, again explicitly called ἀρχαί, are identified: bile, blood and phlegm (A27; Huffman 1993: 297–302). Philolaus thinks that by positing these three as starting points for explanation, he can explain all diseases. Similarly, when it comes to explaining the faculties of living beings, four principles (ἀρχαί again) can explain the existence of human beings, animals and plants: the genitals which produce seed and are common to all, the umbilical cord, which is conceived as a root that animals have in common with plants, the heart which is the seat of sensation and the emotions that humans and animals share, and the brain, which is the seat of intelligence and belongs to humans alone (fr. 13; Huffman 1993: 307–23). Finally, when it comes to the sciences, Philolaus calls geometry the ἀρχή, the starting point or first principle, of all the rest of the sciences. Here Philolaus may be trying to explain the history of the sciences up to his time and be arguing that we can only understand that history if we recognize that geometry was the starting point. Philolaus' usage of ἀρχή has much in common with its usage in contemporary medical treatises to refer both to an initial premise in an argument and to an explanatory principle and may have been developed under the influence of medicine (Huffman 1993: 83). What is crucial in regard to the *Pythagorean Precepts* is that the fragments of Philolaus demonstrate beyond a doubt that a systematic search for ἀρχαί in various domains of enquiry played a central role in the thought of at least one earlier Pythagorean.

The first assertion of this second half of fragment 10, that in everything an ἀρχή is something of the highest value, thus could expect assent not just from those who understood it to refer to the proverb that the beginning is the half of the whole, but also from Pythagoreans like Philolaus who regarded ἀρχαί as explanatory principles in various domains of enquiry. Indeed, the text goes on to specify initially the domains of the ἀρχή as precisely those domains where it is likely to have played a prominent role in Philolaus: sciences, practices and generation. By sciences presumably are meant primarily the mathematical sciences of arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music, although they are here called ἐπιστήμαι rather than μαθήματα, which is the word

used by Archytas in fragment 1 (in fragment 4 the word is τέχνη) and probably by Philolaus (fr. 7a). No surviving text of Philolaus or Archytas uses ἀρχαί to refer to the first principles or elements of these mathematical sciences, although Philolaus does describe geometry as the ἀρχή, or “starting point,” of the other sciences. Plato, however, refers to the first principles of mathematics as ἀρχαί (*Resp.* 510b–511c) and it is possible that already in the fifth century Hippocrates of Chios used the word in this way (*Simpl. In Arist. Phys.* CAG 9.61.5; but see Lloyd 1979: 112 for cautions). Thus, there is little reason to doubt that Pythagoreans before the time of the *Precepts* had referred to the basic principles of mathematics as ἀρχαί.

The “practices” which are mentioned after the sciences in the *Precepts* are likely to be rationally organized practical activities in contrast to the abstract study of the sciences (see the detailed notes) and could well include medicine, where Philolaus posited three ἀρχαί of disease (A27). Other practices might include navigation, sports, such as boxing, and arts, such as architecture and sculpture, all of which are here conceived of as having starting points or first principles, which must be followed if the practice is to succeed. “Generation” completes the first triad, begun by sciences and practices, in which starting points are crucial. At first sight it seems an odd addition. In many ways, however, it fits Philolaus’ earlier account of ἀρχαί best. Thus, Philolaus’ search for principles, both that explain the generation of the cosmos as a whole (fr. 1 and fr. 6) and also that explain the development of the various types of living being (fr. 13), is a search for ἀρχαί in generation. Indeed, the use of ἀρχή as a starting point in generation only seems initially odd because it follows sciences and practices. In fact, this use is likely to be the earliest in the philosophical tradition and may go back to Anaximander, if he indeed called the *apeiron* from which the cosmos was generated the ἀρχή (DK 12A9; Kahn 1960/85: 30–2). Other fragments of the *Precepts* make clear that the biological generation of parts of the cosmos such as children as well as plants and animals must have been intended here. Fragments 4 and 9 emphasize the importance of the conditions under which children are conceived and educated. Fragment 9 says that it is frivolous to produce life without making serious provision that the arrival into life of those generated be as fine as possible (lines 163–4) and describes the necessity of rearing puppies and colts properly from the beginning (ἐξ

ἀρχῆς – line 58). Thus, fragments 4 and 9 are clearly in agreement with fragment 10 that the starting point is crucial in generation.

After the triad of sciences, practices and generation, the fragment carefully marks that it is turning back (καὶ πάλιν αὖ) to the other basic meaning of ἀρχή in Greek, “rule” or “power.” This meaning is again illustrated with a triad of examples: rule in the household, the city-state and the military. Further discussion of this sense of ἀρχή will be provided below, but what should be noted here is the insistence that these two domains, the domain of science and nature on the one hand, and the domain of human society on the other, have in common a particular concern for starting points, which govern everything that follows after them. This is a clear example of the universal importance of structure and control in the Pythagorean view of the world; ruling principles are found in all aspects of human existence.

The Pythagoreans next go on to make four important observations about these starting points. First, they emphasize that, despite their importance, their nature is hard to see and detect. This remark presumably applies in all six domains where ruling principles have been said to have a role. Only one example is given, however, which derives from the realm of the sciences. The example is very revealing and introduces a second major thesis about starting points: in order to arrive at starting points in the sciences, one starts by looking at “the parts of the investigation,” i.e. presumably, at all the disparate results of our enquiry into a given area. It then requires “no ordinary intellect” in order to understand and distinguish well what sort of thing is a starting point or first principle of these disparate parts. Here, then, a starting point is clearly being presented as a universal or whole of some sort in contrast to the particular results or parts of an investigation. Obviously such a starting point is not temporal; it is not something we grasp at the beginning of our enquiry. It only comes to be seen with some difficulty later, after surveying the results of all the parts of the investigation. For example, Empedocles presumably did not start from the assumption that earth, air, fire and water were starting points or basic principles that govern the cosmos but rather came to recognize these principles after surveying the results of his enquiries.

Third, the Pythagoreans stress that, although a starting point is hard to discern, in part because it is a universal principle, it makes all the

difference whether the correct principle has been identified. The fourth and final point explains why the choice of starting points is crucial: "For, generally speaking, nothing of the things that follow after will be sound if the true starting point is not known." The ἀρχή in the sciences is crucial in that it determines what follows logically. If we start from the wrong place, if we are ignorant of the true starting point(s), it may not be possible to account for all of the parts of the science. Other precepts put particular emphasis on the importance of the starting point in biological generation and in the development of human beings, although the word *arche* does not actually appear. Fragment 4 emphasizes the condition of the parents who beget a child on the grounds that their state at conception will have great influence on the nature of the child conceived. Thus, individuals should not engage in sex before the age of twenty, so that their bodies might be fully developed and thus produce good offspring. Again, those engaging in sex should not be full of food or drink, since fine offspring will not arise from bodies that are discordant and disordered. In fragment 2, emphasis is put on orderly upbringing starting immediately in childhood, and the corresponding passage in Iamblichus (VP 202) stresses that the orderly upbringing of the child must be carried over into the training of the youth. So in biological generation no less than in sciences and practices, the Pythagoreans taught that the correct starting point was crucial, although in biological generation the ἀρχή does come first temporally, whereas in the science its priority is logical.

The Pythagoreans then argue that the choice of an ἀρχή is just as decisive for the other triad of household, city-state and military camp. The true ruler of the city-state is analogous to the right principle in a science, and, presumably, there is the same sort of difficulty in discerning that ruler amongst all the members of the state as there is in determining the first principle of the science after surveying its parts. There is also a second difficulty in making sure that the state will be well governed. The true ruler must undertake the rule willingly. Indeed, both the ruler and the ruled must be willing that the ruler undertake supervision of the state. This point is bolstered by an analogy with education where both the pupil and the teacher must be willing if learning is to be achieved. What is the analogue in the sciences, if any, of the willingness of the ruler in the family, city-state and military camp? Perhaps the Pythagoreans saw an analogy between the logical consistency of principles in the

sciences and the mutual agreement of ruled and ruler in human social relations. Thus, just as no science will be successful unless its starting points or first principles are logically consistent with all of its parts, so no household or city-state will ever be well managed unless both ruler and ruled agree in the establishment of the rule.

Beyond the suggested parallel between the starting point in a science and the starting point in a city-state, however, the discussion of ἀρχή as rule in the household, city-state and military raises some puzzles whose solution can make an important contribution to our understanding of the Pythagorean ethical system as a whole. The two central points are that 1) the true ruler must be found and 2) the ruler must willingly undertake the rule and supervision. The conception of a true ruler is relatively easy to understand, even if the exact characteristics that make for such a ruler are not spelled out. Not just anyone will make a good ruler. Throughout the *Precepts*, the Pythagoreans consistently emphasize that it is not the views of the many that should be valued. Thus in fragment 5 they reject “what is called beautiful and fine by the many” and in fragment 9 they advise that it is unreasonable to pay attention “to the opinion of the many.” Fragment 2 suggests a clear reason for this disparagement of the views of the many. There the Pythagoreans assert that the ruler must be knowledgeable (ἐπιστημῶν) and, as fragment 9 makes clear, those who have knowledge are few. Even if this last remark is a comment by Iamblichus rather than part of the original text (see the commentary *ad loc.*), Iamblichus is surely right about the Pythagorean train of thought. Thus the true ruler will be rare, since knowledge is rare, and will also be difficult to discern.

The requirement that the ruler be willing is more problematic. It is quickly expanded into the broader point that both the ruler and the ruled must be willing and this in turn is illustrated by a parallel in education, where it is said that both teacher and pupil must be willing. If either of the two parties in these two relationships resists, the desired result, learning in the case of education and good government in the case of rule, will not be achieved. This emphasis on the willingness of both partners causes difficulties in two ways. First, it can appear rather banal. Of course both need to be willing for the best results. The desirability of acting willingly rather than under compulsion is emphasized by a number of Greek authors and has almost a proverbial status. Thus, Theognis says “everything that is compulsory is by nature grievous”

(472) and in the *Phaedrus*, Plato writes “compulsion in all its forms is a burden to all” (240c). The Pythagorean emphasis on the necessity of the willingness of both parties, however, suggests that the Pythagoreans are making a stronger point than just that people do not like to be forced to do things. Yet, this emphasis on the willingness of both parties also raises further questions. Many people might be willing to concede that it is important to emphasize that learners and the ruled be willing and not just coerced, if education and government respectively are to succeed. The unwilling student or subject is a common phenomenon. The other side of the equation seems more difficult. Why emphasize the need for the willingness of teachers and rulers? People seem all too willing to impose their views and will on others.

In order to understand the emphasis on the willingness of the ruler as well as the ruled, it will be necessary to look at the issue in terms of the basic principles of human behavior developed by the Pythagoreans elsewhere in the *Precepts*. The fundamental assumption of the entire Pythagorean ethical scheme is that human beings are by nature both ὑβριστικός, i.e. they are naturally insolent and excessive, and also controlled by a complex variety of disorderly desires (fr. 8). Given this basic nature, human beings can only be saved if they have proper supervision, which does away with the excess and confusion and establishes order (fr. 2 and fr. 8). Given this understanding of human nature, it is possible to understand why the Pythagoreans would assume that human beings do not have a natural desire to rule. Fragment 2 says not only that rulers need knowledge, but also that they must be φιλόανθρωποι, i.e. they must love humanity; they must be benevolent and kindly towards their subjects. In light of other passages in the *Precepts*, this benevolence must mean a desire to preserve and save human beings’ ability to live a good life. Fragment 2 asserts that the human being is not such as to be saved without any supervision. Such concern for the interests of those supervised is obviously in conflict with the basic human desire for personal precedence assumed by the Pythagoreans. The ruler might also have self-interested motives for ruling, both because a society in which the natural hubris of all its individuals remains unchecked will not be a desirable place to live and also because he may need the order of society to help check his own hubristic nature. Thus, the ruler may need to check his natural impulse to narrow self-interest both to benefit the other members of the community and to benefit himself. So, for the state to be well

governed a true ruler must be found, one who has knowledge, but the ruler also has to accept the rule willingly despite the call of his basic nature to pursue narrow self-interest, i.e. the ruler must pursue rule out of a concern for humanity, his own and that of others.

On the other hand, the ruled also have to put aside their basic hubristic nature and be willing to be ruled, because they have recognized that they can only be saved if they have supervision. As fragment 2 puts it, they must be obedient, but they must also love the rulers, they must be φιλάρχοντες. If fragment 10's insistence on the ruled being willing is another way of stating this point, then "loving rulers" may simply be a stronger way of saying that the ruled are willing to accept that rule be imposed upon them. Perhaps the fear of what our hubristic nature can do to us leads to an active desire for or love of the imposition of rule.

More specifically, what is it that leads to this willingness to rule and be ruled in defiance of our natural instinct to pursue our own narrow personal interests? Fragment 8 again suggests that the willingness arises as a result of persuasion. In that fragment, the Pythagoreans emphasize that one must pay attention to one's parents and the laws "not in a counterfeit way but conforming oneself to these things out of conviction" (fr. 8). The Greek word translated as "out of conviction" is πεπεισμένως, literally "having been persuaded." This usage suggests that the willingness to rule and to be ruled arises as the result of our being persuaded by arguments such as those given above.

The situation in teaching is analogous. The teacher, like the ruler, is not allowed to pursue his narrow self-interest but is persuaded to willingly accept the role of providing academic discipline in order to help in the saving of humanity. The student must be willing to submit to the discipline imposed by the teacher. The point here is quite different than what appears at first sight to be a similar point raised by Plato. At *Republic* 536d–e Plato argues that the propaedeutic mathematical studies should be presented to the young not in the form of compulsory instruction, "for the free person should not learn any subject in slavery" since "nothing learned by force remains fixed in the soul." Since pupils do not retain what they learn by compulsion, Plato argues that they should pursue their studies as play. A number of other passages in Plato stress the value of play in early education in a similar way (*Leg.* 819b–c), although the point is often not that learning needs to be play, as it is at *Republic* 536d–e, but the slightly different one that play needs to be learning (*Resp.* 424e–425a;

Leg. 643b–d, 797a–b; *Plt.* 308d). In Plato learning is supposed to be incorporated in play so that the pupils will retain what they learn. There is no mention of play in the *Precepts*. The student is willing not because learning has been made fun but because he or she has been persuaded of the need of accepting the appropriate discipline. It might be objected that it is not possible to reason with young children. While this is certainly true, the Pythagoreans might respond that young children can nonetheless be inculcated by means of drill with the idea that they need supervision and come to accept that ideal through constant reminder of their basically hubristic nature. This is, in fact, exactly the point made in fragment 2, where the Pythagoreans urge that from childhood on, even diet should emphasize that order and due proportion are fine and advantageous. Fragment 8 completes the argument by stressing that such order will only arise if human beings are subject to supervision. Thus the young can be persuaded to submit to supervision willingly.

It is tempting to suppose that Plato was aware of and was responding to this Pythagorean emphasis on the mutual willingness of ruler and ruled, when he wrote the *Republic*. Certainly, when Plato asserts that the rulers of the ideal state will not act willingly when they rule (*Resp.* 519c – ἐκόντες . . . οὐ πράξουσιν) and will have to be compelled to do so, he appears to flatly contradict the Pythagorean assertion here that the state will not be well governed unless the ruler undertakes the rule willingly (ἐκουσίως). The issue is complex, however, and it is difficult to be sure how Plato's position relates to that of the Pythagoreans. Plato points out already in Book 1 of the *Republic* that true rule is for the advantage of the ruled (347d) and it has been shown above that the Pythagoreans also put forth this view. Thus both Plato and the Pythagoreans agree that rule should not be undertaken for personal enrichment or power. Plato argues that in order to take on the rule of others, which does not benefit the ruler but rather the ruled, the ruler must receive some compensating benefit (pay etc.) or be compelled to do so in order to avoid a penalty, if he does not (347a). Plato argues in Book 1 that the true ruler, who is not interested in pay or honor, will be compelled to rule in order to avoid the rule of worse people (347c) and also, in Book 7, by a duty to pay back the state from which he has received his upbringing (520a–e). As indicated above, in the *Pythagorean Precepts* the ruler will rule because such rule is necessary to save humanity and the ruler himself will also need such saving. It is ultimately the ruler's recognition that he cannot be saved

unless he undertakes rule that leads him to rule and, once he is persuaded of this, he in fact rules willingly.

In Plato's case the ruler is also persuaded by argument that he must rule, the argument that he has a duty to the state that raised him and that by ruling he will avoid the rule of worse people. Why then does Plato not conclude that the ruler will after all rule willingly? The crucial difference between the Platonic and the Pythagorean position is that Plato can envisage a life for the philosopher outside of the state that is better than any life he could have in the state, a life devoted to the study of the forms and ascent to the form of the good. As long as this life is an option, the philosopher king will always rule unwillingly in that there is a life that would be better for him, the life of study. The Pythagoreans on the other hand do not suggest that such a life is available. The ruler needs order and discipline as much as the ruled and cannot exist safely outside the order established by society, even if he, as ruler, is, in part, responsible for establishing that order. In ruling, the Pythagorean ruler shows his love for humanity and his desire to preserve it not just as it is found in other human beings but also as it appears in himself and thus rules willingly in a way that the philosopher king does not. The difference between Plato and the Pythagoreans on this point is ultimately based on Plato's distinction between the intelligible and sensible world. The Pythagoreans envisage no life outside of the sensible world and hence suppose that the ruler can be persuaded to rule willingly in a world in which he must participate. By recognizing the intelligible world Plato also provides a life of the mind devoted to that world, which makes participation in this world something that has to be compelled and that is not pursued willingly.

Detailed Commentary

Line 8 – ὁμιλίας: In the discussion of the argument of the fragment above I argue that ὁμιλίας means “interaction” between people in the sense of the basic social intercourse. ὁμιλίας also appears in the last sentence of fragment 11, which deals with friendship. In fragment 11 the central point is that no ὁμιλίας should arise “negligently or haphazardly but with reverence, consideration and proper order, lest any emotion be aroused haphazardly, casually and mistakenly.” Here ὁμιλίας refers to any interaction between the members of the friendship and says that if proper rules have been established those interactions will not arise in a way that

could arouse emotions that would be harmful to the friendship. Thus, the usage of fragment 11 agrees with the usage here in fragment 10, in that in both cases it refers to individual acts of social interaction. These will occur in friendships no less than in our day-to-day meetings with people other than friends.

Line 8 – τὸ μὲν εὐκαιρον, τὸ δὲ ἄκαιρον: For the concept of καιρός see the discussion of the content of the fragment above. As that discussion shows, there is no parallel in Plato or Aristotle for the detailed consideration of “appropriateness” and “inappropriateness” found here in the *Precepts*, where καιρός and its cognates appear fourteen times in this single paragraph. Similarly, εὐκαιρος, ἄκαιρος and ἀκαιρία are uncommon words in Iamblichus and the great majority of their uses occur precisely in this passage (eleven out of fifteen uses in all of Iamblichus). Of course καιρός itself is more common than these other words in Iamblichus, as it is in all Greek literature, but there is no thematic discussion of καιρός, such as we find in the *Precepts*, elsewhere in Iamblichus. Thus, there can be little doubt that the detailed analysis of καιρός belongs to Aristoxenus’ Pythagoreans and not to Iamblichus.

Regarding the text, most editors (e.g., Deubner, DK) have kept the manuscript reading τὸν μὲν εὐκαιρον, τὸν δὲ ἄκαιρον. Translators appear to accept the manuscript text as well, but their translations in fact reflect Nauck’s emendation (1884), which I have accepted above. On the manuscript reading, it is not clear what noun we are to understand as agreeing with the masculine accusative singular articles and adjectives. The only possible referent in the previous sentence is τρόπος, “manner” or “way.” Clark’s translation appears to take this approach (“Now there is also a kind of justice in dealings with others, and the Pythagoreans taught that too, in the following way. There is, they said, a right way and a wrong way” [1989: 79]). But the previous sentence suggested that what followed was not going to be an account of alternate appropriate and inappropriate ways but rather the one Pythagorean way of dealing with intercourse with others. This awkwardness can be seen in Clark’s translation, which moves from “the following way” to suddenly talking about two ways, a right way and a wrong way. It is also important to note that “way” (τρόπος) is Iamblichus’ word and is part of his introduction to the quotation from the *Precepts* rather than being part of the *Precepts* themselves. It may be then that the masculine articles were inserted either by Iamblichus or by a copyist in order to connect Iamblichus’ introduction to what follows.

Normally one would expect that the masculine article would refer to a person (“the one man is appropriate, the other inappropriate”) but the adjectives “appropriate” and “inappropriate” in Greek as in English are not usually applied to people. Thus in lines 24–5, where the masculine plural articles are used and clearly do refer to people, the adjectives are not used but rather the adverbs

(“some do so appropriately and others inappropriately”). One of the *Characters* of Theophrastus is, however, named the “inappropriate” (ὁ ἄκαιρος) or “tactless” man so it might just be possible that the manuscript text here could be translated “one man is appropriate and the other inappropriate.” This suggestion becomes untenable because of what follows, however. If we accept the manuscript text, the passage reads “the one man is appropriate and the other inappropriate and they are distinguished by difference in age.” This makes no sense. A person is not called appropriate or inappropriate on the basis of his difference in age from another person. It is appropriate or inappropriate acts that are distinguished from one another by the relative age of the persons involved.

The simple way to deal with the difficulty is to follow Nauck and emend the articles to the neuter so that the article plus adjective forms a substantive in the typical Greek fashion (“the appropriate” and “the inappropriate”). Thus I translate “there is appropriateness and inappropriateness.” This is in fact the way the passage is translated by both Dillon and Hershbell (1991: 191: “there is both appropriateness and inappropriateness”) and Brisson and Segonds (1996: 99: “un moment opportun et un moment inopportun”), although they follow Deubner’s text. It is clear both from these two translations and the discussion above that what is wanted in the context is a reference to “appropriateness” and “inappropriateness” and Nauck’s emendation should be accepted. The manuscript text is easily explained either as a mistaken attempt to make the adjectives agree with the word τρόπος, in Iamblichus’ introductory sentence, or as arising out of confusion of the use of the masculine article with καιρός, which is a masculine noun, in line 29.

The adjective εὔκαιρος and the adverb εὐκαιρῶς appear once each in this fragment and De Vogel raises the question of whether there is any connection between the Pythagorean usage of these terms and the later Stoic concept of εὐκαιρία (1966: 116, n.1). Εὐκαιρία is not a particularly prominent Stoic term, but it is mentioned in a couple of passages of Cicero. At *De Finibus* 3.14.45, in a discussion of Stoicism, Cicero says that he will translate εὐκαιρία as *opportunitas* and makes the point that this opportuneness (or appropriateness) is not increased by prolongation of time, since what is opportune has attained its proper measure. Later in the *De Finibus* (3.18.61), he reports that the Stoics say that happiness, i.e. living in accord with nature, is a matter of opportuneness. In the *De Officiis* (1.40.142), Cicero says the opportune time for an action is called εὐκαιρία in Greek but *occasio* in Latin. The Stoics call the opportune time for an action, the place of an action and the science of knowing how to put actions in their place, εὐταξία. Thus εὐταξία is the broader science of orderly conduct, which includes the selection of the proper actions but also the opportune time for an action, εὐκαιρία. Dyck suggests that εὐκαιρία was a virtue derived from rhetoric and cites Aristotle *Rhet.* 1408a36, although, as discussed above, the concept of καιρός in

rhetoric goes back to Gorgias (1996: 322). In Arius Didymus' *Epitome of Stoic Ethics* (Stob. *Ecl.* 2.7.11e), it is said that one characteristic of right acts (κατορθώματα) is that they are opportune acts (εὐκαιρήματα). Thus, it is clear that right actions for the Stoics explicitly concerned their being done at the right time and that the observance of opportuneness was an important part of the happy life. Does this have any direct connection to the concept of καιρός and εὐκαιρία in the *Pythagorean Precepts*? It does not seem very likely. As noted above, the concept of καιρός was discussed in a wide range of Greek literature and had a particularly prominent development in rhetorical theory. Thus there is no need to suppose that the background for the Stoic usage was Pythagorean rather than this broader usage. De Vogel argued that there was likely to be a connection with Pythagoreanism because the Stoic concept of εὐκαιρία was related to the concept of εὐταξία in Cicero's account (*De Off.* 1.40.142) and τάξις is an important concept for the Pythagoreans (1996: 119). Again this is too slight a similarity upon which to base a judgment that the Stoics were drawing on the Pythagoreans. Although τάξις does appear elsewhere in the *Pythagorean Precepts*, it does not appear in the discussion of καιρός here in fragment 10. Moreover, it is also an important concept in other Greek philosophers who discuss καιρός, notably Plato (e.g., *Gorg.* 504a). The crucial point is that there is nothing in the Stoic usage to tie it to the specifics of the Pythagorean conception as outlined in fragment 10. The Stoic conception is clearly focused on the temporal aspect of καιρός, while in fragment 10 the emphasis is rather on a broader sense of appropriateness. Moreover, the Stoic texts show no trace of the Pythagorean use of differences in age, reputation etc. to explain the concept.

Lines 9–10 – *ἡλικίας τε διαφορᾷ καὶ ἀξιώματος καὶ οἰκειότητος τῆς συγγενικῆς καὶ εὐεργεσίας*: Each of the four terms on the basis of which the Pythagoreans evaluate appropriateness is well attested in the late fifth and fourth centuries, so there is no reason to doubt that they go back to Aristoxenus. Both ἡλικία (age) and εὐεργεσία (benefaction) are common words from the beginnings of Greek literature. It is noteworthy that ἀξίωμα (status) becomes fairly widely used in Aristotle and Demosthenes, while it occurs only six times in Iamblichus, three of which are in this passage from the *Precepts*. Note that οἰκειότης often means simply “close relationship” without indicating specifically a family relationship so that συγγενικός is an appropriate addition to show that it is a “family relationship” that is in question. Thus, in Thucydides 4.19 the Spartan ambassadors to Athens concerning the situation at Pylos offer Athens peace and alliance and also “great friendship and a close relationship” (φιλίαν πολλήν καὶ οἰκειότητα). There is no question of οἰκειότης referring to any sort of family relationship here. On the other hand συγγενικός is a rare word at all times. It does occur ten times in Aristotle so Aristoxenus could have used it. It only

occurs in one other place in Iamblichus. The relative rarity of συγγενικός explains why the combination οικειότης συγγενική is very rare, occurring only six times in Greek literature up to the ninth century AD. The fact that the earliest pairing of the terms is found in Philo in the first century AD need not mean that it does not go back to Aristoxenus. Both words were available in the fourth century BC and the lack of a parallel for their combination at that time is perfectly explicable in terms of the rarity of συγγενικός. The combination never occurs in Iamblichus.

Aristotle also believes that our different relationships with different people make different claims upon us. His lists of these relationships show some similarity to the list given here in the *Precepts* but the similarity is of the sort that arises from discussions of similar topics rather than suggesting that there is any relation of dependence between Aristotle and the *Precepts*. Thus at EN 1165a16–17 Aristotle lists “parents, brothers, companions and benefactors” (γονεῦσι καὶ ἀδελφοῖς καὶ ἐταίροις καὶ εὐεργέταις) as having different claims on us. “Benefactors” overlaps with the *Precepts* but not the other three.

Line 10 – καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο: In the fragments preserved in Stobaeus, which are likely to reflect Aristoxenus’ text closely, lists of specific items or cases are common (e.g., fragment 3) but generalizing clauses like this are not, so it might seem that this is an addition of Iamblichus or his source. However, the generalizing phrase here, καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο, is found only here and in lines 33–4 below in the entire corpus of Iamblichus, so it does not look like a phrase that is characteristic of him. The phrase does appear once elsewhere in Aristoxenus, in *Elementa Rhythmica* Book 2 (fr. 4). So I have put brackets around this clause as a possible insertion by Iamblichus but it may well belong to Aristoxenus.

Line 11 – διαφοραῖς: προσφοραῖς? Diels διαφορᾶς Cataudella. The previous sentence has argued that what is appropriate and what is inappropriate in relationships are determined by differences in age, rank, closeness of relation and benefits conferred. This sentence adds “any other such thing” to the list of categories of difference (age, rank etc.). Since this other thing seems to be a difference, with the manuscript text the meaning is something like “and if there is any other such difference among the differences in relation to one another,” which is redundant. It was presumably this redundancy that led Diels to propose emending διαφοραῖς to προσφοραῖς. The sense intended is thus “and if there is any other such difference in what is fitting to one another.” The difficulty with this emendation is that, while the adjective πρόσφορος does mean “fitting”, the noun προσφορά, which is what is needed here with the feminine article ταῖς, is not used elsewhere in this sense. Thus, Diels’ emendation would require us to suppose that προσφορά is being used in a novel way as an

extension of the usage of the adjective πρόσφορος. Cataudella suggests reading the genitive διαφορᾶς and assuming that the dative article goes with an understood ὁμιλίαις so that the meaning is “and if any other thing is of difference (i.e. constitutes a reason for differentiation) in relations between people” (1960: 449–50). However, the manuscript text probably means something very similar. The redundancy of that text is, in fact, not very objectionable because “if there is any other such thing” is in the neuter and thus does not literally refer to “difference,” which is feminine in Greek. “If there is anything else in the differences between people” is just a slightly awkward way of saying “if there is any other difference between people.” As I argue above, this sentence is, in fact, likely to be an expansion of Aristoxenus’ text written by Iamblichus, so that the awkwardness of expression is due to Iamblichus’ attempt to adapt Aristoxenus’ text for his own purposes. Note that in lines 33–4 Iamblichus uses almost the same means of joining his comment to Aristoxenus’ text: “and if there happens to be anything else of the same kind” (καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο τυγχάνει τοῦτοις ὁμοιογενὲς ὄν).

Lines 11–12 – ἔστι γὰρ τι ὁμιλίας εἶδος: This clause explains how age is a factor relevant to determining what is appropriate and thus is likely to go back to Aristoxenus, since such γὰρ clauses are found elsewhere in the fragments of the *Precepts*.

Line 12 – νεωτέρῳ μὲν πρὸς νεώτερον: πρὸς μὲν νεώτερον Nauck (addenda and corrigenda LXXVI). For the correct defense of the manuscript text and for keeping τὸν in line 13 see Deubner (1935: 649).

Lines 13–14 – οὔτε γὰρ ὀργῆς οὔτε ἀπειλῆς . . . οὔτε θρασύτητος: Again, all of these words are well attested in the fourth century and likely to go back to Aristoxenus, although this list of three terms is not paralleled in any text at any time.

Line 14 ἄκαιρον: Deubner, cf. 101.9 <εὔκαιρον> Rohde <προσῆκειν παῶσιν> Diels. Deubner’s supplement to the text is simple and superior to the other proposals (1935: 681). The immediately preceding sentence has made the point that the same action can be appropriate or inappropriate depending on whether a young man behaves in a given way towards another young man or towards an older man. Rohde’s suggested supplement “appropriate” does not further explain this statement, as we would expect given γὰρ. Instead, it states a truism that “not every form of anger or threat is appropriate.” On Deubner’s reading we are given the further information that, although we might expect that anger and threats are generally bad, in fact, not every form of anger and threat is inappropriate, although all such behavior must be avoided as inappropriate towards one’s elders. Diels’ emendation does not produce as forceful a contrast with what

follows (“not every form of anger . . . is fitting for everyone, but one must avoid all such behavior as inappropriate for a young man to his elder”). Deubner’s emendation also has some probability in that the word ἀκαίρον appears twice in the immediately preceding sentence so that a copyist’s eye might have been led to skip this third instance. Cataudella suggested that what was needed was a verbal adjective in parallel with εὐλαβητέον but Cataudella’s proposal, φαντέον, is unparalleled and hence can hardly be accepted (1960: 450).

Line 15 – εὐλαβητέον: This verbal adjective is not particularly common but is much more likely to go back to Aristoxenus than to be derived from Iamblichus. There are parallels for it in the time of Aristoxenus; Plato uses it four times and Aristotle six. It appears nowhere else in Iamblichus.

Line 16 – παραπλήσιον δέ: This expression is found in several fourth-century authors and particularly in Aristotle and Theophrastus, although nowhere else in Aristoxenus. The singular appears nowhere else in Iamblichus but the neuter plural appears below in line 20 in a passage that is likely on other grounds to derive from Iamblichus and at VP 195. So in terms of language the expression could belong either to Aristoxenus or Iamblichus. However, the rest of lines 16–20 (middle) use vocabulary that is characteristic of Aristoxenus and/or the *Precepts* (see below) so that these lines are likely to reflect Aristoxenus’ text rather than being an addition by Iamblichus.

Lines 17–18 – ἐπὶ καλοκαγαθία ἔχοντα (Brisson/Segonds): There are two problems with the manuscript text here (ἐπὶ καλοκαγαθίας ἦκοντα ἀληθινὸν ἀξίωμα). First, ἦκω in this sense, i.e. “to have reached a point,” usually takes the preposition εἰς, whereas ἐπὶ is usually used to indicate the object of attack or to express the purpose of the motion (LSJ). Second, on the manuscript reading, the position of ἐπὶ in the sentence is very strange, since it is placed not before the words that it governs, ἀληθινὸν ἀξίωμα, but two words earlier. Brisson and Segonds (1996: 200) neatly solve these problems with minimal changes and cite an apt parallel from pseudo-Zaleucus (Thesleff 1965: 227.17–18). On their reading ἐπὶ now governs the dative immediately following it and ἔχοντα governs the following accusatives.

The word καλοκαγαθία occurs sixteen times in Xenophon and eight in Aristotle, so it was clearly in common use in Aristoxenus’ time. It is also fairly common in Iamblichus who uses it eight times. Seven of these uses are in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. It is interesting, however, that one of these is in the passage that Iamblichus explicitly identifies as from Aristoxenus’ account of the attacks on the Pythagoreans (249), an account that probably appeared in Aristoxenus’ book *On Pythagoras and His Associates*. In that passage Aristoxenus reports that, despite the attacks on the Pythagoreans by the

Cylonians, the nobility (καλοκαγαθία) of the Pythagoreans at first prevailed so that the cities continued to entrust their political affairs to the Pythagoreans (this sentence also appears at *VP* 129). This suggests that καλοκαγαθία was an important term in Pythagorean moral vocabulary and hence it is likely that its use here in line 18 goes back to Aristoxenus too.

Line 18 – εὔσχημον: This is a common term in the *Precepts*. It appears in fragment 9, line 67 and in fragment 5, line 4. For the meaning, see the commentary on fragment 9, line 67. The “seemly” is there identified as one of the proper goals of human action, so it is not surprising that it is used here as one of the goals in our interactions with others.

Line 19 – προσφέρειν . . . παρρησίαν: This combination is only found elsewhere in Plutarch (*How to Tell a Flatterer* 51d2), other expressions being used instead (e.g., people are often described as acting μετὰ παρρησίας). Παρρησία is a very common word in the fifth and fourth centuries and there is certainly no problem in supposing that Aristoxenus used it. “Frankness” appears in the later stories concerning the courage shown by Pythagoras in speaking frankly to the tyrant Phalaris (Iambl. *VP* 215–20; cf. Aristox. fr. 32 concerning the tyrant Dionysius). There is, however, no obvious connection between this theme of frankness before tyrants and the *Precepts*’ restriction on excessive frankness towards those of true nobility.

Line 19 – πολλήν: The manuscript reading πάλιν can only be understood as reinforcing παραπλήσιον, i.e. “in the *similar* account concerning reputation it is *again* the case.” If this is the meaning, however, the position of πάλιν is very unusual. Its position suggests that in the case of reputation we are again supposed to avoid outspokenness, but while anger was mentioned in the earlier cases, outspokenness was not. Cobet’s emendation has a clear force that explains the position of the word and supposes a relatively easy error in copying, especially since πάλιν and πολλήν would be pronounced similarly.

Lines 20–2 – παραπλήσια . . . εὐεργέτας: The use of direct statement here (ἐλέγετο) in the midst of the indirect statement of the passage as a whole indicates that this sentence does not belong to the *Precepts*. In the fragments of the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus verbs of saying or thinking are always followed by the accusative and infinitive of indirect statement. It looks as if Iamblichus is here summarizing a more detailed discussion that was found in the *Precepts*, where there is no parallel for summarizing of this sort.

Lines 22–3 – ποικίλην τινὰ καὶ πολυειδῆ τὴν τοῦ καιροῦ χρεῖαν: For the meaning of ποικίλος see the note on fragment 8, line 13. It is a central term in

the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Here in fragment 10 the emphasis appears to be on the complexity of the practice of what is appropriate. There is a sense that this complexity can be overcome, although not completely. Thus, the connotation of the term is not as negative as it is in its use to describe human nature as a whole (fr. 8) and human desire in particular (frs. 3 and 9) as having a complex, almost chaotic, variability in which it is very difficult to establish order. In fragment 3 as here, ποικίλος is paired with πολυειδής.

Lines 23–6 – ... ὀργιζομένων ... θυμουμένων ... ὀρεγομένων ... ἐπιθυμούντων ... ὀρμώντων: All of this vocabulary is typical of the fourth and fifth centuries and there is thus no reason to doubt that the sentence belongs to Aristoxenus.

Lines 27–8 – τὸν αὐτὸν δ' εἶναι λόγον ... ἐντεύξεων: It is difficult to be certain whether this sentence belongs to Aristoxenus or Iamblichus. The form of expression here, where an argument in one domain is extended to another domain by asserting that “the same argument also exists concerning” (τὸν αὐτὸν δ' εἶναι λόγον καὶ περὶ) is found a number of other times in passages of Iamblichus that derive from the *Precepts*. It appears again below in lines 46–7 of fragment 10, but also in lines 55 and 87–8 of fragment 9. The nominative form of the same expression appears at the end of fragment 11 in lines 36–7. It also appears at VP 234 where Iamblichus explicitly says that he is quoting from Aristoxenus, although the work that Iamblichus cites as the origin of the quotation is not the *Precepts* but *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. Moreover, the expression appears four times in Aristoxenus' works on music (*Harmonics* 50.4 and 75.20 and *Rhythmics* fr. 4 and fr.11). All of this evidence suggests that the clauses in which these expressions occur derive from Aristoxenus and are not additions by Iamblichus. The expression is, however, also found four times in Iamblichus' *De Mysteriorum* (1.3, 4.7, 5.3 and 5.15). It appears with a similar but not identical meaning twice in paragraph 165 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, a section that is not derived from the *Precepts*. Thus, while the evidence given above makes it likely that the expression goes back to Aristoxenus, it is possible that Iamblichus is responsible for some of the uses of the expression in the passages from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, which are listed above and which derive primarily from the *Precepts*, including the use here in lines 27–8.

All of the vocabulary in these lines is perfectly possible for Aristoxenus and much of it is paralleled elsewhere in the *Precepts* (e.g., διάθεσις is found in fr. 9, lines 36, 38, 75, 113, 119; πρᾶξις is also found in fr. 2; πάθος appears in fr. 8 line 14, fr. 11 lines 6 and 35 and fr. 9, lines 64, 77 and 81). However, the combination of ὁμιλιῶν and ἐντεύξεων is not very common and appears first elsewhere in Polybius (5.88.4), but that is at least partly because ἐντεύξις is an

uncommon word. It appears nowhere else in Aristoxenus and in only one other place in Iamblichus (VP 57.8).

The main reason for suspecting that the sentence is an insertion by Iamblichus is that it is again a generalizing summary that is not paralleled elsewhere in the reliable fragments of the *Precepts*. It is also somewhat surprising that ὁμιλιῶν is included in this list, since its inclusion is otiose given that the whole paragraph is about ὁμιλίαι. It is more likely that Iamblichus would make such an addition when editing an extract for his purposes than that Aristoxenus, who is focused on the concept of ὁμιλία, would do so. I have put brackets around the whole sentence to indicate that it might be an addition by Iamblichus, but perhaps only the last three words should be bracketed, and it is possible that the whole sentence does belong to Aristoxenus.

Line 29 – εἶναι δὲ τὸν καιρὸν μέχρι μὲν τινος διδακτόν: This is very likely to go back to Aristoxenus. The phrase μέχρι τινός is much more likely to be due to Aristoxenus than Iamblichus (see the commentary on fr. 9, line 115). The adjective διδακτός appears nowhere else in Iamblichus and is thus unlikely to be his addition. It also does not occur elsewhere in the surviving fragments of Aristoxenus but it is common in the first part of the fourth century when Aristoxenus was writing, particularly in Plato.

Lines 29–30 – ἀπαράλογον καὶ τεχνολογίαν ἐπιδεχόμενον: These words are characteristic of later Greek and are likely to be an insertion by Iamblichus. Staab notes that ἀπαράλογον is unparalleled in Greek literature and that all other words with the stem ἀπαρραλογ- belong to post-Christian era authors (2002: 389, n. 954). I would add the third adjectival phrase, τεχνολογίαν ἐπιδεχόμενον (“admitting systematic treatment”), as another likely intrusion by Iamblichus. Apart from a possible use in the *Anonymous Londinensis*, all the uses of τεχνολογία belong to the Christian era and it appears six times in Iamblichus. If the second and third adjectives belong to Iamblichus, then the phrase which follows them (καθόλου δὲ . . . ὑπάρχειν) should also be ascribed to Iamblichus, since it refers to attributes of τὸν καιρὸν in the plural (τούτων) and without the additions by Iamblichus only one attribute is assigned to it. Of course, that these passages were added by Iamblichus in no way undercuts the fact that the majority of sections 180–3 are derived from Aristoxenus. See the section on the extent of the fragment above.

Lines 31–2 – ἀκόλουθα δὲ εἶναι καὶ σχεδὸν τοιαῦτα οἷα συμπαρέπεσθαι τῇ τοῦ καιροῦ φύσει: The construction is awkward. I understand καὶ to join ἀκόλουθα δὲ εἶναι and συμπαρέπεσθαι (“attend on and accompany”) both of which govern the dative τῇ τοῦ καιροῦ φύσει (“the nature of the appropriate”). The subject of these

two infinitives is σχεδὸν τοιαῦτα οἷα (“pretty much the following sorts of things”) although the word order is awkward and these words would go better after φύσει.

The adjective ἀκόλουθος is very common in the fifth and fourth centuries BC. It is mostly commonly used substantively to mean a person’s “follower” or “attendant.” As an adjective it is used to mean “following on,” “in conformity with” or “consistent with” and usually takes the dative as it does here in line 31. A good parallel for the usage here is Plato’s reference to conduct that is dear to, and “in conformity with” god (*Laws* 716c). Aristoxenus also uses ἀκόλουθος in this way in his *Rhythmics* (fr. 7). On the other hand, συμπαρέπω is not a common verb. It appears nowhere else in Iamblichus or Aristoxenus. It does, however, appear five times in Xenophon, twice in Plato and once in Aristotle’s *Problems* so that there is no reason to doubt that Aristoxenus used it.

Lines 32–3 – τήν τε ὀνομαζομένην ὥραν καὶ τὸ πρέπον καὶ τὸ ἀρμόττον: For the meaning of these terms see the general account of the argument of lines 8–34 given above. For τὸ πρέπον see Pohlenz 1933. In fragment 9, line 71, the comparison with fragment 3 preserved by Stobaeus shows that Iamblichus expanded Aristoxenus’ ἐπιθυμίας τοῦ τῆς σωματικῆς ὀνομαζομένης ἐπιθυμίας so it is possible that here in line 33 Aristoxenus wrote simply ὥραν and that Iamblichus added ὀνομαζομένην. Since ὥρα most commonly had the meaning of season or time of day, either Iamblichus or perhaps Aristoxenus added ὀνομαζομένην in order to indicate that it is being used in its more restricted sense of “fitting time.”

Lines 33–4 – καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο . . . ὁμοιογενές ὄν: As noted above on line 10, the phrase καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο in itself appears more likely to belong to Aristoxenus than Iamblichus. The other vocabulary does not help much in determining authorship since ὁμοιογενές is a rare word that appears nowhere else in either Iamblichus or Aristoxenus. It is used twice by Aristotle so there is some parallel for Aristoxenus using it in the fourth century. This sort of a generalizing of the main point is not common in the *Precepts* so it might still be an addition by Iamblichus. I have accordingly put the clause in brackets, although it may, in fact, belong to Aristoxenus.

Line 36 – ἀρχήν: For the usage and meaning of this term see the general account of the argument of lines 36–56 above.

Line 36 – ἀπεφαίνοντο: This verb is not used to introduce a precept elsewhere in the fragments of the *Precepts* preserved either in Stobaeus or Iamblichus. The middle of the verb is not used elsewhere in Aristoxenus. The middle forms of this verb are commonly used in the doxographical tradition to report the views of a given philosopher (e.g., in fragments 88 and 123 of Aristoxenus,

the verb is used to introduce a report of Aristoxenus' views) so that there is the suspicion that whatever verb Aristoxenus originally used has been replaced by Iamblichus or his source. However, the middle of the verb is used frequently in Aristotle in a similar way to report people's views (e.g., *Metaph.* 1009b21) so that it is not impossible that Aristoxenus used it.

Line 37 – ἐν ἐπιστήμῃ τε καὶ ἐμπειρίᾳ καὶ ἐν γενέσει: Ἐπιστήμη and ἐμπειρία appear as a contrasted pair in a number of Greek authors. The former basically refers to theoretical or scientific knowledge while the latter refers to experience or practice (LSJ 1 and II). Plato often contrasts the two strongly. Thus, at *Republic* 409b Socrates argues that the good judge must be an old man who learns about injustice late in life and first perceives it not in himself but in others and who discerns how great an evil it is by theoretical knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) rather than by his own experience (ἐμπειρία). In other cases they are complementary. At *Republic* 422c, Plato refers to the science and practice of boxing (ἐπιστήμη τε καὶ ἐμπειρία). Earlier in the *Republic* Plato has emphasized the importance of natural ability for any pursuit and specifically adds to it the science and practice of that pursuit (374d – on this triad see Shorey 1909). This time the word used with ἐπιστήμη is μελέτη, “exercise” or “practice,” which indicates that practice is indeed the proper gloss for ἐμπειρία in its pairing with ἐπιστήμη in the later passage (422c). Plato generally denigrates experience or practice in comparison to knowledge, arguing that the former cannot give an account of the things with which it deals or explain the causes of what happens. He thus criticizes rhetoric in the *Gorgias* as being a practice rather than an art or science and compares it to cookery (463b and 465a). In the *Laws* he contrasts slavish physicians, who get their art by observation and practice without any theory, with free doctors who study nature and give an account of disease from its origin (720b and 857c).

Aristotle is somewhat more positive about experience and practice, arguing that when it comes to action they may in fact be more effective guides than theoretical knowledge, but he still recognizes that those that have theoretical knowledge are wiser because they can explain the causes, while the man of experience cannot (*Metaph.* 981a12–30). Aristotle uses ἐμπειρία in a technical sense as the experience that is produced by many memories of the same thing. He notes that this experience is similar to art and science but that art and science actually arise from experience, when a universal notion is formed from many experiences (*Metaph.* 980b28–981a7; see also *APo.* 100a5). Art and science deal with the universal, e.g., with all persons of a certain type, while experience deals with a particular person, e.g., Socrates. Isocrates, like Plato, recognizes that there are three factors in education: the natural ability of the student, the knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) provided by the teacher and the practice (ἐμπειρία) in the application of this knowledge (*Antid.* 187–8). It appears that ἐμπειρία could be used more

loosely by less philosophical authors and then approaches something like an art or craft, so that it is still tied to actual practice but involves knowledge as well. Thus Polybius says that no one takes up the arts and crafts (ἐμπειρίας καὶ τέχνας) for the sake of knowledge (ἐπιστήμη) itself but rather for the resulting good or utility, a statement that clearly suggests that ἐμπειρίας do involve knowledge (3.4.10.5). The examples for the meaning of craft provided by LSJ (III), however, are, for the most part, not convincing and can be understood as referring to a practice. It would seem most reasonable that Plato, Isocrates and Aristotle are the relevant texts in terms of which to understand the usage of the *Precepts*, so that it is likely that the pairing of ἐπιστήμη and ἐμπειρία here is to be understood as the contrast between theoretical knowledge and actual practice.

The usage of ἐμπειρία here is further illuminated by its use in another of the fragments of the *Precepts*, fragment 5. In that fragment a distinction is first made between pursuits and sciences (ἐπιτηδεύματα, ἐπιστήμαι). Each of these terms is then repeated with the addition of another term clearly intended to be related to it. Thus, we get the pairs, customs and pursuits (ἔθων τε καὶ ἐπιτηδεύματων), and ἐπιστήμαι τε καὶ ἐμπειρίαι. The first pair seems to refer to all the things that we do in the course of our life that do not involve organized bodies of knowledge. Included here would be the pursuits that make up our daily life such as the regimen we follow in eating and in exercise, what we do for enjoyment, and our interactions with other people, e.g., friendships, family relationships, business relationships. A number of these are governed by custom and hence “pursuits” are paired with “customs.” Thucydides tells us that the Athenians took offense at the pursuits (ἐπιτηδεύματα) of Alcibiades (6.15), where the reference is clearly to his horse racing and his general manner of living and relating to other people. On the other hand, we study organized bodies of knowledge, sciences or arts (ἐπιστήμαι). When ἐμπειρίαι are mentioned in this context and in contrast to customs and pursuits, it appears as if they must refer to the actual practice of the sciences or arts of which ἐπιστήμαι are the theoretical study. The importance of this usage in fragment 5 for fragment 10 is that it shows that we should not understand ἐμπειρία to refer to just any activity that we pursue or action we take but rather specifically to rationally organized practices, which also admit of scientific study. It is however, to the actual practice of such sciences or arts that ἐμπειρία refers, whether the person pursuing the practice has knowledge of the science or not.

After asserting that an *arche* is important in science and in practice, the Pythagoreans added, as a third related sphere for its importance, “in generation” (ἐν . . . γενέσει). An *arche* is thus important in all sorts of processes of generation. In addition to biological generation, productions resulting from crafts, e.g., statues or pots, are described by some authors as γενέσεις. In the *Statesman*, for example, Plato refers to weaving, fulling and mending as having roles to play

in the care and production (γενέσεως) of clothes (281b). In the *Precepts*, however, crafts such as weaving would seem to be included under practices (ἐμπειρίαι) rather than under generation. For further discussion of the importance of the ἀρχή in generation see the account above of the argument in lines 36–56.

Line 38 – ἐν οἰκίᾳ τε καὶ πόλει καὶ στρατοπέδῳ: This particular triad of institutions is not paralleled in any Greek text up to and including the time of Iamblichus, but all three are obviously widely referred to individually in the fifth and fourth centuries, so there is no problem in supposing that the triad goes back to Aristoxenus.

Line 39 – συστήμασι: A σύστημα is a whole compounded of parts like its English derivative, “system.” It is used already in Plato to refer to a political organization (*Laws* 686b) and Aristotle treats the *polis* as a σύστημα (*EN* 1168b32). It is used in a specialized sense to refer to a system of intervals in music (Plato, *Philebus* 17d2). It appears in this musical sense sixty-four times in Aristoxenus, especially in his *Harmonics*, which is not surprising since he identifies systems of intervals as the primary subject of harmonics (5.19–22 Da Rios; see Barker 2007: 150–2).

It might seem then that the description of the household, the city and the military camp as συστήματα must be due to Aristoxenus. However, the word appears nowhere else in the *Precepts* and is only used in its musical sense elsewhere in what survives of Aristoxenus. On the other hand, Iamblichus does not seem very likely to have used the word in this political sense either. The word appears in forty-five places in Iamblichus but the uses are mostly musical or mathematical (number can be defined as a “system” of monads, see *Th. Arith.* 17.17) and are found in his *Commentary on Nicomachus’ Arithmetic* or the *Theology of Arithmetic*, which is probably not in fact by Iamblichus. There are six other uses in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* besides the one in fragment 10, and four of these are in musical contexts. There is no other context in Iamblichus where he describes the household, polis or military camp as a σύστημα.

The other two uses in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* do point to a specifically Pythagorean use of the term. They both occur in Chapter 266 and thus probably come from the source that Iamblichus is following here (Rohde argues that it is Apollonius). Here the Pythagorean society is described as a σύστημα. Moreover, Diogenes Laertius (8.45) employs the term in a similar way when he comments that Pythagoras’ “school” (σύστημα) lasted until the ninth or tenth generation. What is particularly striking about the context in Diogenes is that the immediately following sentence draws on Aristoxenus as a source, noting that the last of the Pythagoreans, whom Aristoxenus knew, were Xenophilus etc. It is very tempting to suppose, in light of the use of σύστημα here in the *Precepts* to refer to social and political organizations, that the reference to Pythagoras’ σύστημα as lasting for

nine or ten generations derives from Aristoxenus as well. This suggestion receives further support from the fact that Diogenes Laertius nowhere else describes a philosophical school as a σύστημα. Although certainty is far from possible on this issue, it seems more likely than not that Aristoxenus is responsible for the use of σύστημα here in fragment 10 and that he chose to apply the term in this way or perhaps is drawing on a Pythagorean tradition that did so.

There is also a very prominent use of the term in the pseudo-Pythagorean writings, usually in the Doric form σύστημα. Centrone (2014: 321) points out that the notion of *systema* is central to the pseudo-Pythagorean treatises as a whole, where it is “a complex structure, comprised of many different parts, which while different and even opposite to one another, are brought together under a common rule” (e.g., Kallikratidas 103.21–3 Thesleff 1965). The universe as a whole is then regarded as a system, which is composed of a series of sub-systems (e.g., city, family, individual soul). As Centrone points out, the analogy between macrocosm and microcosm plays a large part here. The treatment of the household, city and military camp as συστήματα here in the *Precepts* can be seen as a precursor of this later pseudo-Pythagorean usage, but this triad is not mentioned in the pseudo-Pythagorean writings and the *Precepts* differ significantly in not appealing to the microcosm/macrocosm analogy. Nor do the later pseudo-Pythagorean treatises focus explicitly on the concept of ἀρχή as the *Precepts* do, although again the pseudo-Pythagorean treatises do call on us to recognize a hierarchy in these systems in which the better rules the worse (Centrone 2014: 321).

Line 39 – δυσθεώρητον δ' εἶναι καὶ δυσσύνοπτον: The first adjective is found twice in Aristotle and these are the earliest uses in Greek. At *HA* 511b13 Aristotle comments that earlier thinkers have not given an adequate account of the blood and blood vessels. He adds that earlier thinkers were ignorant of them because such things are δυσθεώρητον. He then goes on to discuss the difficulty of observing the blood vessels in both dead and living animals so that it is clear that δυσθεώρητον means exactly “hard to observe” or “hard to see.” The second adjective is rare, appearing only five times, first in Polybius where it is used twice with the meaning of “hard to see,” both of a river in a gorge and of surroundings obscured by mist (3.84.2.2; 8.26.7.1). In Theon it is used of the motion of the fixed stars, which is said to be so small that it is “hard to detect” (*In Ptol.* 809.16). The word is so rare that the fact that it is first attested in Polybius is not necessarily evidence that the passage in the *Precepts* is a late addition. However, since the word appears to be just a synonym for δυσθεώρητον and since one of the most characteristic changes that Iamblichus makes to the *Precepts* is to add extra adjectives (see the Introduction), it seems very likely that δυσσύνοπτον is an addition by Iamblichus.

Line 40 – ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς εἰρημένοις: This sort of fullness of expression is more characteristic of Iamblichus than Aristoxenus (see the Introduction).

Line 41 – οὐ τῆς τυχεύσης: For the possibility that this is a characteristic phrase of Aristoxenus’ see the commentary on τοῦ τυχόντος in fragment 9, line 16.

Line 41 – διανοίας: In this context διάνοια appears to refer in a general way to the faculty of intellect or thought. It is commonly used of the mind or intellect in contrast with the body (Arist. *Pol.* 1271a1; *Pl. Leg.* 916a). Here the point is that not just any intellect is capable of discerning a starting point. The usage is similar to subsidiary precept 1, where διάνοια refers to the intellect that we are supposed to put in order first thing in the morning before meeting other people. It also appears in fragment 8, line 19, where one is supposed to keep before one’s mind (διανοίας) the idea that the gods pay attention to human conduct and in fragment 7, line 11, where the concept of innate (bad) luck is explained in terms of being born with an intellect (διανοίας) that “is never borne toward the target but is always confused.”

Lines 41–2 – τὸ καταμαθεῖν τε καὶ κρῖναι καλῶς: The verb καταμαθεῖν is very common in the early fourth century in authors such as Isocrates, Xenophon and Plato and is used by Aristoxenus in the *Harmonics*. It is used here with its sense of “perceive” (with the mind) or “understand” (cf. *Harmonics* 15.22). The phrase κρῖναι καλῶς is common in Aristotle (e.g., “each person judges well that which he knows” *EN* 1094b28) and is used by Aristoxenus in the *Harmonics* (44.6).

Line 42 – τὰ μέρη τῆς πραγματείας: Aristotle (*Top.* 139a24, *Soph. el.* 165a35) is the first to use this expression (“the parts of the discussion” or “the parts of the investigation”). Aristoxenus himself uses it even more frequently in the *Harmonics* where it appears five times (e.g., 7.4 10.9, 10.18). It never appears elsewhere in Iamblichus.

The word πραγματεία is found earlier in the Pythagorean tradition, in fragment 4 of Archytas, where it means “investigation” in a description of geometry and logistic as dealing with “the investigation of shapes.” In the *Republic* geometry is defined as “the investigation (πραγματεία) of plane surfaces” (528d). It can also mean “business” or “occupation” with a possessive genitive, e.g., “the business of dialectic” (ἡ τοῦ διαλέγεσθαι πραγματεία) at *Pl. Thet.* 161e. In Aristoxenus’ *Harmonics* it comes to mean “science” in some passages but more frequently has the less formal sense of “study” or “investigation” (Huffman 2014b: 291). Here in fragment 10, since it is used in the context of the sciences, the parts of the πραγματεία are most readily understood as the parts of “the investigation” undertaken in pursuit of whatever science is involved. Of course,

the investigation of a general domain of inquiry, e.g., plane surfaces, may proceed after a fashion before the actual science, e.g., geometry, is established. This seems to be the case here, where science is presented as starting with investigation of a given domain resulting in a rather disconnected collection of parts, which do not become a science until the ἀρχαί are identified.

Line 43 – **μεγάλῃν δ' εἶναι διαφοράν**: This phrase is found nowhere else in Iamblichus or the writings of Aristoxenus. It is, however, found in Aristotle (e.g., *Pol.* 1336a3) and Aristoxenus' contemporaries in the Lyceum (Theophrastus, *Hist. pl.* 4.9.2.8).

Lines 43–4 – **περί ὅλου τε καὶ παντός**: Plato uses the phrase ὅλον . . . καὶ τὸ πᾶν at *Laws* 944c to mean “totally,” “wholly” or “entirely.” The cases of a man who is forcibly stripped of his shield and one who willingly throws it away are said to be “wholly” or “entirely” different (διαφέρει δὲ ὅλον που καὶ τὸ πᾶν). In *Alcibiades* 1 109b the same expression occurs except that there is no article before πᾶν. Here in the *Precepts*, Harder thought that the article was needed with ὅλου, but, as the parallels from Plato show, the article is not always used in this expression (1966: 133). I have not been able to find any exact parallels for this idiom using περί, but it is clearly just a variation of the more standard form without the preposition used by Plato and others. Literally, the second half of the sentence says that “the risk comes to be nearly concerning the whole and all.” Clark (1989: 80) expresses the idea well in translating “everything is at risk” except that “nearly” (σχεδόν) needs to be added.

Line 45 – **ὥς ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν**: This phrase, which means “generally speaking,” was first used by Aristotle and he uses it frequently. It also appears frequently in Theophrastus, so it clearly caught on in the Lyceum. Aristoxenus uses it twice in the *Harmonics* (45.6 and 45.11). It is not particularly common in later Greek literature. The other use of the phrase in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* appears in another section derived from the *Precepts* (fr. 9, line 33). Iamblichus does use the phrase three times in his *De Mysteriis*.

Line 45 – **ὕγιες**: This adjective can describe a “healthy” or “sound” body, but it is also very frequently applied to the mind and its products, such as speech (LSJ s.v. η). It is frequently used, as it is here in the *Precepts*, to assert that there is “nothing sound” in some mental activity such as a plan, thought or speech. In some cases the clear implication is that the lack of soundness depends on an inner contradiction, e.g., in Herodotus (6.100) the plans of the Eretrians are described as not sound (οὐδὲν ὕγιες) because their counsels were divided. Similarly, in *Republic* 7, Socrates argues that sometimes our perceptions seem to provide adequate information but in other cases perception produces

“nothing sound” (οὐδὲν ὑγιές -523b; see Shorey’s note *ad loc.* in the Loeb (1930–5) for further examples). The examples that Socrates goes on to provide are of cases where our sensations seem to give us contradictory information, e.g., that the same finger is both large and small depending on to what it is compared. Thus, the lack of soundness again involves a contradiction in the evidence of our senses. This sort of implication seems also to be present here in the *Precepts* since the choice of inappropriate basic principles in a science might well lead to inconsistencies as the science is developed.

Line 46 – τῆς ἀληθινῆς ἀρχῆς: I have not been able to find any other Greek philosophical text that refers to a “true starting point,” so this idea seems to be unique to the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts*.

Lines 46–7 – τὸν αὐτὸν δ’ εἶναι λόγον καὶ περὶ: See the commentary on lines 27–8 above.

Lines 47–8 – οὔτε γὰρ οἰκίαν οὔτε πόλιν εὖ ποτε ἂν οἰκηθῆναι: I have not found any parallel for the use of the passive of οἰκέω with both οἰκία and πόλις. However, Xenophon in the *Memorabilia* (4.4.17.1) has Socrates use similar language when he says that without agreement (ὁμόνοια) neither is the city well governed nor the household well managed (οὐτ’ ἂν πόλις εὖ πολιτευθεῖη οὐτ’ οἶκος καλῶς οἰκηθεῖη). The arguments of the two passages are considerably different, however. Socrates is arguing that neither the state nor the household can flourish unless the members of these institutions agree to follow the relevant laws or norms, whereas the Pythagoreans are emphasizing that rulers of states and the masters of households must be true rulers and masters and must undertake the rule and supervision willingly. In part this may involve the ruler and the master being willing to be subject to the laws of the state or household but the emphasis is rather on their being fit to play the role and doing so willingly.

Lines 48–9 – ἄρχοντος καὶ κυριεύοντος: I have not found any parallel for the pairing of these two words in this way, although in the later Christian tradition the words are occasionally paired in expressions such as “ruler of rulers and lord of lords” (John Chrysostom *De paenitentia* 49.327.24). Here in the *Precepts*, since the rule of the city-state and control over the household are being compared, it appears that ἄρχω is supposed to refer to the rule over the state (πόλιν . . . ἀρχῆς) while κυριεύω refers to the authority and power exercised by the master of the household (οἰκίαν . . . ἐπιστασίας). Elsewhere, κυριεύω is used both of the power of a ruler over lands he has conquered (Xen. *Mem.* 2.6.22) and also of the control and power of the husband over the wife (Arist. *EN* 1160b35) or the wife over the husband (Diod. Sic. 1.27) in the household.

Line 49 – τῆς ἀρχῆς τε καὶ ἐπιστασίας: The great majority of the uses of ἐπιστασία (“authority” or “dominion”) belong to the first century BC and later. In Philo (*Quod deterius* 142.4) we find the same pairing as here in reference to people whom God considers “unworthy of His dominion and governance” (ἐπιστασίας καὶ ἀρχῆς). The first use of the word in the sense of authority or oversight is found already in Xenophon (*Mem.* 1.5.2), however, so that its usage in this sense is perfectly possible for the *Precepts*, which would have been written some fifty years later.

Line 49 – ἐκουσίως: For the idea that rule ought to be undertaken willingly see the discussion of the argument of lines 36–56 above.

Line 50 – ἐπιστατεῖαν: For the usage of this word, which appears to be distinctively Pythagorean, see the commentary on fragment 8, line 9.

Lines 51–6 – ὥσπερ καὶ τὰς μαθήσεις . . . : The last five lines of the fragment show such marked similarities with fragment 6 of the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus that a connection must be supposed. The general point is the same as in fragment 6 and four key words are repeated in closely similar but not identical form (μαθήσεις, ὀρθῶς, ἐκουσίως, ἐπιτελεσθῆναι). Given Stobaeus’ generally very faithful excerpting, however, something like his text must have appeared somewhere in the *Precepts*. What we have here in fragment 10 is a quite radical rewriting of it. One possibility is that fragment 6 stood in this position in the original text of the *Precepts* but that Iamblichus or his source radically rewrote it. In that case when constructing the text of the *Precepts* we should remove the last five lines as they appear in Iamblichus (starting with ὥσπερ in line 51) and replace them with the text as it appears in fragment 6. A second possibility is that fragment 6 stood elsewhere in the *Precepts* and Iamblichus or his source remembered it and inserted a paraphrase of it as a relevant parallel to the point being developed here in fragment 10. In that case the last five lines should be printed as they appear in Iamblichus but they should be put in brackets to show that they are his insertion. A third possibility is that Aristoxenus wrote both fragment 6, which occurred elsewhere in the *Precepts*, and himself wrote these five lines of fragment 10. In this case the text should be printed as in Iamblichus but with no brackets. In the latter case there could still be some minor paraphrasing by Iamblichus, but the supposition would be that most of these five lines of Iamblichus come from Aristoxenus. There is no certain way to decide between these three possibilities and the question cannot be settled with complete confidence. The last five lines are, however, written so as to fit the context well. In particular, parallel phrasing is used in ἀμφοτέρων γὰρ [δεῖ] βουλομένων . . . τοῦ τε ὄρχοντος καὶ τῶν ἀρχομένων . . . ἀμφοτέρων βουλομένων, τοῦ τε διδάσκοντος καὶ τοῦ μανθάνοντος. This is more careful

integration of the passage than appears elsewhere in the paraphrases of Iamblichus, where the tendency is just to add material without matching the rhetorical structure (see the Introduction). In addition the phrase δεῖν ἔφασσαν γίνεσθαι matches a number of the phrases that introduce *Precepts* in Aristoxenus. Thus, it seems somewhat more likely that these five lines belong to Aristoxenus and represent his repetition, in a different context, of an idea that also appeared elsewhere in the *Precepts*, presumably in a section on teaching and learning, in the form we see in fragment 6. It is true that there is no exact parallel for this practice in the fragments preserved in Stobaeus, where we can be sure that the text is the work of Aristoxenus. The fragments in Stobaeus are, however, very limited in number and likely to be chosen to avoid just such repetition, so that the lack of an exact parallel for the practice I am attributing to Aristoxenus here in fragment 10 is not enough to outweigh the considerations mentioned above, which suggest that the lines are the work of Aristoxenus.

Line 55 – ἐπιτελεσθῆναι: For the usage of this word in the *Pythagorean Precepts* see the commentary on fragment 4, line 5 and fragment 6, line 3.

22 | Fragment 11: Friendship

Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, 101–2, 230–3.

The entire fragment is preserved in sections 230–3 of Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, but about the first half of the fragment is also preserved earlier in the *VP* by Iamblichus in sections 101–2. In neither case does Iamblichus indicate the source of the information that he quotes, which is typical of his procedure in most of his writings. Both the contexts in which the fragment is preserved are important for understanding the nature of the fragment and for the arguments to show that these texts are in fact a fragment from Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*. Accordingly, I present the contexts in order below with commentary on each, followed by the text of the entire fragment with commentary. When quoting the two contexts, I will quote only the beginning and the ending of the fragment, and leave out the main body, which is then given in the text of the entire fragment.

Context A: Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, 101–2

Παραδίδοται δὲ καὶ ἄλλος τρόπος παιδείσεως διὰ τῶν Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων καὶ τῶν εἰς τὸν βίον καὶ τὰς ἀνθρωπίνας ὑπολήψεις διατεινουσῶν, ἀφ' ὧν ὀλίγας ἐκ πολλῶν παραθήσομαι.

παρήγγελλον γὰρ ἐκ φιλίας ἀληθινῆς ἐξαιρεῖν ἀγῶνά τε καὶ φιλονεικίαν . . .
(102) φιλίαν μὴ ἀπογινώσκειν ἀτυχίας ἔνεκα ἢ ἄλλης τινὸς ἀδυναμίας τῶν εἰς τὸν βίον ἐμπιπτουσῶν, ἀλλὰ μόνην εἶναι δόκιμον ἀπόγνωσιν φίλου τε καὶ φιλίας τὴν γινομένην διὰ κακίαν μεγάλην [τε καὶ ἀνεπανόρθωτον].

τοιούτος μὲν οὖν ὁ τύπος ἦν τῆς διὰ τῶν ἀποφάσεων παρ' αὐτοῖς γινομένης ἐπανορθώσεως, εἷς τε πάσας τὰς ἀρετὰς καὶ ὅλον τὸν βίον διατείνων.

1 διὰ] (ὁ) διὰ Nauck

Translation

There has also been handed down another method of education through the Pythagorean precepts, which pertain both to the way of life and to the suppositions of men, from which I will record a few out of many:

For they advised that competition and rivalry be removed from true friendship . . . (102) A friendship is not to be renounced on account of misfortune or any of the other disabilities that befall us in life, but renunciation of a friend and a friendship is only acceptable if it comes about on account of great [and incorrigible] vice.

Such was the manner of correction that arose among them through their precepts, which pertained to all the virtues and to the whole of life.

Extent of the Quotation from the *Pythagorean Precepts*

Rohde (1871–2 = 1901: 143), Dillon and Hershbelt (1991: 125), and Burkert (1972: 101, n.17) all regard sections 101–2 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* as derived from Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*. Staab does not respond to Rohde's points and hypercritically concludes that it is impossible to identify the source with any certainty (2002: 331). Brisson and Segonds (1996) have nothing to say about the source of the passage. Iamblichus begins section 101 with the assertion that "there has also been handed down another method of education through the Pythagorean precepts" and then says that he will give a few out of many examples. The crucial point is that the expression "Pythagorean precepts" (Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων) occurs in only two places in the entire Pythagorean tradition: here, and in the title that Stobaeus gives to the work of Aristoxenus, from which he draws his excerpts. Thus, short of an explicit mention of Aristoxenus' name, Iamblichus' reference to Pythagorean precepts is as strong evidence as possible that what he quotes here comes from Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*. This conclusion is, moreover, strongly confirmed by the close correspondence between stylistic features of sections 101–2 and the style of the fragments of the *Pythagorean Precepts* preserved by Stobaeus, as I will show below. The end of the passage quoted from Aristoxenus is clearly demarcated by Iamblichus in the last sentence of section 102: "Such was the manner of correction that

arose among them through their precepts, which pertained to all the virtues and to the whole of life.” Thus, Iamblichus’ introduction and the coincidence of the style of the passage with the surviving fragments of Aristoxenus make it extremely likely that everything between the first sentence of section 101 and the last sentence of section 102 is derived from the *Pythagorean Precepts*.

These arguments show that Iamblichus is quoting from Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts* in sections 101–2, but it remains an open question whether 1) he knew that there was a full treatise on the topic, 2) he had the full text accessible to him and 3) he knew that this work was by Aristoxenus. It is possible that Iamblichus knew of the tradition of teaching with precepts and saw the precepts cited in various secondary accounts of Pythagoreanism without realizing that there was a treatise with this name and that it was by Aristoxenus. In essence the question is whether, when Iamblichus says Παραδίδοται δὲ καὶ ἄλλος τρόπος παιδείσεως διὰ τῶν Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων, we should follow Dillon and Hershbell and capitalize the *Pythagorean Precepts* as a book title (1991: 125), or whether the phrase should be left uncapitalized as simply referring to a style of teaching using precepts. The presence of the article before Pythagorean sayings in Iamblichus’ text may have suggested to Dillon and Hershbell that he regarded the phrase as a book title. When Stobaeus quotes from Aristoxenus he does use the article (i.e. ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοξένου Πυθαγορικῶν ἀποφάσεων). On the other hand, the article need only indicate that Iamblichus knew of the precepts as a distinct group. He may only have known them through excerpts in other authors rather than as a book by Aristoxenus. His failure to mention Aristoxenus in this context might suggest this conclusion, but, even if Iamblichus knew that Aristoxenus had written a book entitled *Pythagorean Precepts*, he may have regarded Aristoxenus as simply the collector of precepts preserved in the Pythagorean tradition, and hence not their author in any important sense. Moreover, Iamblichus’ usual practice is not to cite his sources, so there is really nothing surprising in his not mentioning Aristoxenus here. Whatever the reason for Iamblichus’ not naming Aristoxenus, his failure to mention an author makes it most likely that he is not using the phrase Pythagorean precepts as a book title.

Context B: Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, 229–33

(229) Φιλίαν δὲ διαφανέστατα πάντων πρὸς ἅπαντας Πυθαγόρας παρέδωκε, θεῶν μὲν πρὸς ἀνθρώπους . . . δογμάτων δὲ πρὸς ἄλληλα . . . ψυχῆς πρὸς σῶμα . . . (230) ἐν πᾶσι δὴ τούτοις ἑνὸς καὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ κατὰ σύλληψιν τοῦ τῆς φιλίας ὀνόματος ὄντος, εὐρετῆς καὶ νομοθέτης ὁμολογουμένως Πυθαγόρας ἐγένετο, καὶ οὕτω θαυμαστὴν φιλίαν παρέδωκε τοῖς χρωμένοις, ὥστε ἔτι καὶ νῦν τοὺς πολλοὺς λέγειν ἐπὶ τῶν σφοδρότερον εὐνοούντων ἑαυτοῖς ὅτι τῶν Πυθαγορείων εἰσί. δεῖ δὴ καὶ περὶ τούτων τὴν Πυθαγόρου παιδείαν παραθέσθαι καὶ τὰ παραγγέλματα, οἷς ἐχρῆτο πρὸς τοὺς αὐτοῦ γνωρίμους. παρεκελεύοντο οὖν οἱ ἄνδρες οὗτοι (the following text is the same as the fragment of Aristoxenus in *VP* 101–2)

ἐκ φιλίας ἀληθινῆς ἐξαιρεῖν ἀγῶνά τε καὶ φιλονεικίαν . . . (232) φιλίαν μὴ ἀπογινώσκειν ἀτυχίας ἔνεκα ἢ ἄλλης τινὸς ἀδυναμίας τῶν εἰς τὸν βίον ἐμπιπτουσῶν, ἀλλὰ μόνην εἶναι δόκιμον ἀπόγνωσιν φίλου τε καὶ φιλίας τὴν γινομένην διὰ κακίαν μεγάλην [τε καὶ ἀνεπανόρθωτον]. (= the last line of the fragment of Aristoxenus in *VP* 101–2). ἔχθραν ἐκόντα μὲν μηδέποτε αἰρεσθαι πρὸς τοὺς μὴ τελείως κακοὺς . . . (233) ἐν τῇ μελλούσῃ ἀληθινῇ ἔσεσθαι φιλία ὥς πλεῖστα δεῖν ἔφασαν εἶναι τὰ ὠρισμένα καὶ νενομισμένα . . . μήτε πάθος ἐγείρηται μηδὲν εἰκὴ καὶ φαύλως καὶ ἡμαρτημένως, [οἷον ἐπιθυμία ἢ ὀργή. ὁ αὐτὸς δὲ λόγος καὶ κατὰ τῶν λειπομένων παθῶν τε καὶ διαθέσεων.]

ἀλλὰ μὴν τεκμήραιτο ἂν τις καὶ περὶ τοῦ μὴ παρέργως αὐτοὺς τὰς ἀλλοτρίας ἐκκλίνειν φιλίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ πάνυ σπουδαίως περικάμπτειν αὐτὰς καὶ φυλάττεσθαι, καὶ περὶ τοῦ δὲ μέχρι πολλῶν γενεῶν τὸ φιλικὸν πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀνένδοτον διατετηρηκέναι, ἐκ τε ὧν Ἀριστόξενος ἐν τῷ περὶ Πυθαγορικοῦ βίου αὐτὸς διακηκοέναι φησὶ Διονυσίου τοῦ Σικελίας τυράννου, ὅτε ἐκπεσὼν τῆς μοναρχίας γράμματα (234.) ἐν Κορίνθῳ ἐδίδασκε.

Translation

(229) Pythagoras taught most clearly the friendship of all with all, of gods with men . . . of doctrines with one another . . . of soul with body . . . (230) In all of these cases, then, one and the same comprehensive term, friendship, is used, which Pythagoras, it is agreed, discovered and of which he established the laws. He taught such a remarkable sort of

friendship to his associates that still even now the many say of those who are exceptionally well inclined to one another that they are Pythagoreans. It is necessary, then, to provide both Pythagoras' teachings on these matters and also the advice that he gave to his associates. These men, then, prescribed that

{the following text is the same as the fragment of Aristoxenus in *VP* 101–2}

competition and rivalry be removed from true friendship . . . (232) A friendship is not to be renounced on account of misfortune or any of the other disabilities that befall us in life, but renunciation of a friend and a friendship is only acceptable if it comes about on account of great [and incorrigible] vice. {= the last line of the fragment of Aristoxenus in *VP* 101–2} One must never willingly choose enmity towards those who are not totally bad . . . (233) . . . They said that, in a friendship that was going to be true, there should be as many restrictions and conventions as possible . . . lest any emotion be aroused without plan, casually and mistakenly. [For example desire or anger. The same account also applies to the remaining emotions and dispositions.]

But indeed, someone could also conclude that they do not just incidentally shun friendships with strangers, but very earnestly indeed turn away from them and are on their guard against them, and that they resolutely maintain their friendship for one another for many generations, from what Aristoxenus, in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, says he himself heard from Dionysius the tyrant of Sicily, when he was teaching literature in Corinth, after he lost his kingship.

Extent of the Fragment

The material from the middle of section 230 (ἐκ φιλίας ἀληθινῆς), up to and including the first sentence quoted above in the middle of section 232, is virtually the same as material in sections 101 and 102, where, as argued above, the context suggests that it derives from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Rohde thus argued that the material immediately following this repeated passage up to διαθέσεων in the middle of section 233, which

continues the same thought process and maintains the same style, also comes from the *Precepts* (1871–2 = 1901: 166). He has been followed in this by Burkert (1972: 101, n. 17) and Dillon and Hershbell (1991: 227, n. 2). Staab has little to say on the origin of the passage beyond arguing that the appearance of the late word ἀνεπανόρθωτος shows that the passage cannot derive from Aristoxenus (2002: 429, n. 1060), to which argument I will respond below.

The context here in *VP* 229–33 suggests, as did the context in 101–2, that Iamblichus is drawing on Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* from the middle of section 230 to the middle of section 233. The crucial evidence for establishing this point is the awkward shift from the use of singular verbs with Pythagoras as the subject to the use of plural verbs with the Pythagoreans as the subject. Chapter 33 of Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* is devoted to friendship, and Iamblichus starts out the chapter in sections 229 and 230 by describing what Pythagoras himself taught about friendship. In the middle of section 230 he introduces as a transitional sentence, "It is necessary then to provide both Pythagoras' teachings on these matters and also the advice that he gave to his associates." Given this introduction, if Iamblichus had written the following section from scratch, he would surely have continued in the third person singular to say what Pythagoras recommended his associates do. Instead, however, the next sentence begins "These men then prescribed," and what follows is the passage that is essentially identical to a passage in sections 101–2, which I have argued above to be a fragment from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. The best explanation of the situation is that Iamblichus is going on to use a source in which the verbs are all plurals and does not want to go through the entire passage from 230–3 and change all the verbs to singulars, and instead keeps the plurals that he found in his source. He does try to show that the material is relevant to his discussion of Pythagoras himself by claiming that it was advice that the Pythagoreans received from him, so that Iamblichus' readers are supposed to understand that all the things that the Pythagoreans recommend in the following section were things they learned from Pythagoras. From the middle of 230 to the middle of 233 the main verbs then have plural subjects, until abruptly a singular is introduced again with the words "But indeed, someone could also conclude. . . ." From this point on Iamblichus is speaking in his own voice again, and in fact goes on to quote a passage from another work of Aristoxenus, the famous story of

Damon and Phintias from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. In this case, Iamblichus specifically says that he is quoting from Aristoxenus, but, since Iamblichus usually does not cite his sources, this specific citation of Aristoxenus need not mean that he has not just been quoting from another work by Aristoxenus, the *Pythagorean Precepts*, in the preceding passage. As suggested above, Iamblichus may not even be aware that what he has just cited is from the *Precepts* but may be drawing on an intermediary source that used them. The important point is that the awkward insertion of a passage using plural verbs throughout, in a context where Iamblichus himself is using singulars, indicates that Iamblichus is importing material from another source from the middle of section 230 to the middle of section 233. The overlap between this material and the material in sections 101–2, which the context indicates was derived from Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*, shows that the source for the material in 230–3 with the plural verbs was the *Pythagorean Precepts*.

It is important to note, however, that here in section 230 Iamblichus makes a change at the beginning of the passage. In section 101, the passage began with the simple imperfect verb form in the plural with no expressed subject, παρήγγελλον (“they advised”). This is perfectly in keeping with Aristoxenus' style in the *Precepts*. In 230, however, Iamblichus uses a slightly different verb and provides an explicit subject: παρεκελεύοντο οὖν οἱ ἄνδρες οὗτοι (“these men, then, prescribed”). Aristoxenus never provides an explicit subject such as this in the fragments of the *Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus. It seems certain, then, that the Aristoxenian original is found in the version in 101, and that the version in 230 is Iamblichus' own rephrasing in order to make a better transition from Iamblichus' own discussion in terms of Pythagoras himself to the plurals characteristic of the *Pythagorean Precepts*. I will now present the entirety of fragment 11, which is derived from these two contexts in Iamblichus.

Complete Text of Fragment 11 (= Iamblichus VP 101–2, 230–3)

παρήγγελλον γὰρ ἐκ φιλίας ἀληθινῆς ἔξαιρεῖν ἀγῶνά τε καὶ 1
 φιλονεικίαν, μάλιστα μὲν ἐκ πάσης, εἰ δυνατόν, εἰ δὲ μή, ἔκ γε 2
 τῆς πατρικῆς καὶ καθόλου ἐκ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους· 3
 ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ ἐκ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς εὐεργέτας. τὸ γὰρ 4

διαγωνίζεσθαι ἢ διαφιλονεικεῖν πρὸς τοὺς τοιούτους 5
 ἐμπεσοῦσης ὀργῆς ἢ ἄλλου τινὸς τοιούτου πάθους οὐ 6
 σωτήριον τῆς ὑπαρχούσης φιλίας. ἔφασαν δὲ δεῖν ὡς 7
 ἐλαχίστας ἀμυχάς τε καὶ ἐλκώσεις ἐν ταῖς φιλαίς ἐγγίνεσθαι· 8
 τοῦτο δὲ γίνεσθαι, ἂν ἐπίστωνται εἴκειν καὶ κρατεῖν ὀργῆς 9
 ἀμφοτέροι μὲν, μᾶλλον μέντοι ὁ νεώτερός τε καὶ τῶν εἰρημένων 10
 τάξεων ἔχων ἡνδῆποτε. τὰς ἐπανορθώσεις τε καὶ νοουθετήσεις, ἃς 11
 δὴ πεδαρτάσεις ἐκάλουν ἐκεῖνοι, μετὰ πολλῆς εὐφημίας τε καὶ 12
 εὐλαβείας ὦντο δεῖν γίνεσθαι παρὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τοῖς 13
 νεωτέροις, καὶ πολὺ ἐμφαίνεσθαι ἐν τοῖς νοουθετοῦσι τὸ 14
 κηδεμονικόν τε καὶ οἰκεῖον· οὕτω γὰρ εὐσχήμονά τε γίνεσθαι 15
 καὶ ὠφέλιμον τὴν νοουθέντην. ἐκ φιλίας μηδέποτε ἐξαρεῖν πίστιν 16
 μήτε παίζοντας μήτε σπουδάζοντας· οὐ γὰρ ἔτι ῥάδιον εἶναι 17
 διυγιᾶναι τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν φιλίαν, ὅταν ἅπαξ παρεμπέσῃ τὸ 18
 ψεῦδος εἰς τὰ τῶν φασκόντων φίλων εἶναι ἤθη. φιλίαν μὴ 19
 ἀπογινώσκειν ἀτυχίας ἔνεκα ἢ ἄλλης τινὸς ἀδυναμίας τῶν εἰς 20
 τὸν βίον ἐμπιπτουσῶν, ἀλλὰ μόνην εἶναι δόκιμον ἀπόγνωσιν 21
 φίλου τε καὶ φιλίας τὴν γινομένην διὰ κακίαν μεγάλην [τε καὶ 22
 ἀνεπανόρθωτον]. ἔχθραν ἐκόντα μὲν μηδέποτε αἵρεσθαι πρὸς 23
 τοὺς μὴ τελείως κακοὺς, ὁράμενον δὲ μένειν εὐγενῶς ἐν τῷ 24
 διαπολεμεῖν, ἂν μὴ μεταπέσῃ τὸ ἦθος τοῦ διαφερομένου καὶ 25
 προσγένηται εὐγνωμοσύνη. πολεμεῖν δὲ μὴ λόγῳ, ἀλλὰ τοῖς 26
 ἔργοις· νόμιμον δὲ εἶναι καὶ ὅσιον τὸν πολέμιον, εἰ ὡς 27
 ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ πολεμήσειεν. αἵτιον μηδέποτε γίνεσθαι εἰς 28
 δύναμιν διαφορᾶς, εὐλαβεῖσθαι <δὲ> ταύτης τὴν ἀρχὴν ὡς οἶόν 29
 τε μάλιστα. ἐν τῇ μελλούσῃ ἀληθινή ἔσεσθαι φιλίᾳ ὡς πλεῖστα 30
 δεῖν ἔφασαν εἶναι τὰ ὠρισμένα καὶ νενομισμένα, καλῶς δὲ ταῦτ' 31
 εἶναι κεκριμένα καὶ μὴ εἰκῇ, καὶ δῆτα καὶ εἰς ἔθος ἕκαστον 32
 κατακεχωρισμένον δεῖν εἶναι, ὅπως μήτε ὁμιλία μηδεμία 33
 ὀλιγώρως τε καὶ εἰκῇ γίνηται, ἀλλὰ μετ' αἰδοῦς τε καὶ 34
 συννοίας καὶ τάξεως ὀρθῆς, μήτε πάθος ἐγείρηται μηδὲν εἰκῇ 35
 καὶ φαύλως καὶ ἡμαρτημένως, [οἶον ἐπιθυμία ἢ ὀργή, ὁ αὐτὸς δὲ 36
 λόγος καὶ κατὰ τῶν λειπομένων παθῶν τε καὶ διαθέσεων.] 37

9 τοῦτο δὲ γίνεσθαι] anon. τοῦ δὲ γίνεσθαι VP 101 om. VP 231

ἂν] VP 101 ἔαν VP 231 10 μέντοι] VP 231 μὲν VP 101

12 πεδαρτάσεις] VP 231 παιδαρτάσεις VP 101 13 γίνεσθαι] VP

101 γενέσθαι VP 231 20 ἀπογινώσκειν] VP 102

ἀπογιγνώσκειν VP 232 23 αἴρεσθαι] Heraldus αἰρεῖσθαι F 24
 τελείως] Scaliger τελείους F 27 εἰ] Westermann καί F 29 <δέ>]
 Nauck ταύτης] Küster ταύτην F 34 γίνηται] Scaliger γίνεσθαι F

Translation

For they advised that competition and rivalry be removed from true friendship, preferably from all friendship, if possible, but, if not, at least from friendship with family friends and in general from friendship towards elders and in the same way also from friendship towards benefactors. For to engage in intense competition and rivalry with such people, since anger or some other such emotion enters in, does not preserve the existing friendship. But they said that as few as possible wounds and ulcerations should arise in friendships. This comes about, if both know how to yield and to control their anger, or rather the younger and the one who occupies whichever of the ranks that have been mentioned. They thought that it was necessary for corrections and admonitions, which those men called “re-tunings,” to be made by elders to the young with much tact and caution, and that solicitude and propriety be very manifest in those who give admonitions, for in this way admonition is both decorous and beneficial. Trust should never be removed from friendship neither in joking nor in earnest. For it is not easy for the existing friendship to persist still in a healthy state, once deceit has crept into the character of those claiming to be friends. A friendship is not to be renounced on account of misfortune or any of the other disabilities that befall us in life, but renunciation of a friend and a friendship is only acceptable if it comes about on account of great [and incorrigible] vice. One must never willingly initiate enmity towards those who are not totally bad, but having initiated it one must be nobly steadfast and fight through to the end, if the character of the one disputing with you does not change and a spirit of reconciliation does not arise. One must not fight with words but with deeds. Being an enemy is acceptable to human and divine law, if one fights as a human being with a human being. Never, as far as possible, be responsible for a dispute, but as much as possible take precautions that a dispute not begin. They said that, in a friendship that was going to be true, as many things as possible should be clearly defined and in accordance with

customary practice and that these things should be well judged and not without plan. Indeed each of these things should be established as a habit, so that neither does any association arise negligently or without plan, but with reverence, consideration and proper order, nor is any emotion aroused without plan, casually and mistakenly. [For example desire or anger. The same account also applies to the remaining emotions and dispositions.]

Extent and Nature of the Fragment

The discussions provided above of the two contexts in which this fragment appears give strong reasons for concluding that it derives from Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*. There are also a number of close correspondences between the style of this fragment and the distinctive style of the fragments of the *Pythagorean Precepts* preserved by Stobaeus, which provide strong corroborating evidence for this conclusion. Three crucial points of contact with the *Precepts* should be noted: 1) all the verbs are in the third person plural with an understood "they" as subject, 2) all the main verbs are verbs of saying and thinking which introduce indirect statement and 3) throughout the passage these verbs are paired with δεῖν to emphasize what should or must be done (line 7, ἔφασαν δὲ δεῖν; line 13, ῥοντο δεῖν; line 31, δεῖν ἔφασαν; line 33, δεῖν). This emphasis on what should be done is of course a central feature of the fragments of the *Pythagorean Precepts* preserved by Stobaeus, and some of the specific expressions are quite close to what is found in this passage of Iamblichus (ῥοντο δεῖν, fr. 2; ἔφασκον ... δεῖν, fr. 2; δεῖν δὲ ἔφασκον, fr. 2). In addition to these central features of the style of the *Pythagorean Precepts*, two other aspects of the passage should be noted: 1) there is an interest in technical terminology (lines 11–12, ἄς δὴ πεδαρτάσεις ἐκάλουν ἐκεῖνοι) as in the fragments of the *Pythagorean Precepts* (cf. frs. 4 and 5), and 2) the concept of preservation (line 7, σωτήριον) of friendship has possible connections with the concept of preservation (διασώζεσθαι) of human beings in fragment 2.

Are there any obvious intrusions into the text by Iamblichus and in particular any examples of his tendency to expansive paraphrase (see the comparison of Stobaeus and Iamblichus in the Introduction)? There is little evidence of such intrusions except in two places. First, I have bracketed the last four words of the penultimate sentence and the

entire last sentence as unlikely to come from Aristoxenus. These words provide desire and anger as examples of emotions that might be aroused in friendships, and suggest that the same argument can be applied to still further emotions. Such examples and extensions of the argument are not common in the *Pythagorean Precepts* but are typical of Iamblichus' expansive paraphrases. Second, at the end of the section of the fragment quoted in VP 101–2, there is again evidence of expansion. Iamblichus' text says that renunciation of a friendship is only acceptable “if it comes about on account of great and incorrigible vice” (lines 22–3). It is very likely that Aristoxenus' text just mentioned “great (μεγάλην) vice” and that Iamblichus in his typical fashion added ἀνεπανόρθωτον, “incorrigible.” Staab used the appearance of the word ἀνεπανόρθωτος, which is first attested in Philo, as his main argument to show that Iamblichus did not derive the passage from Aristoxenus (2002: 429, n. 1060). As he notes, the word also appears in section 200 of Iamblichus. The problem with Staab's argument is that my study of Iamblichus' methods of adapting his texts shows that he very frequently adds single words or short phrases, so that one word, whose origin is found in a period after Aristoxenus, particularly when that word is a second adjective, is, in itself, no reason to suppose that the passage as a whole does not derive from Aristoxenus. Given the strong evidence that I have provided to show that the fragment derives from the *Pythagorean Precepts*, it is surely more plausible in this case that the use of ἀνεπανόρθωτος is evidence of Iamblichus' typical expansion of the text. The appearance of the word in section 200 also indicates that it is Iamblichus' own addition. In section 200, the word is used in a sentence that is very likely to be Iamblichus' own composition, since it uses a finite form in the midst of a passage that has been almost exclusively in indirect discourse.

Is there any other suspicious usage in the fragment? Remarkably little. There are only three other words that raise any questions at all, but none are seriously problematic. Two of them, ἀπόγνωσις (line 21) and κηδεμονικός (line 15), are unparalleled in the fourth century, but it is still quite possible that the Pythagoreans used them, since related forms of each of these words do appear in the fourth (see the detailed commentary). The third, διυγισίνω in line 18, appears in only one other place in Greek literature but this just means that it is rare and it remains quite plausible that the Pythagoreans used it (see the detailed commentary).

Apart, then, from the two intrusions into the text that I have bracketed, the rest of the fragment is likely to be mostly the words of Aristoxenus.

Structure and Central Precepts about Friendship

There has been almost no discussion of this fragment in modern scholarship on ancient accounts of friendship (e.g., Konstan 1997 does not mention it), perhaps because scholars have not recognized that it derives from Aristoxenus in the fourth century rather than from Iamblichus himself. The fragment is structured by six basic precepts regarding friendship, which are in turn supported by some subordinate precepts. The first precept urges that all competition and rivalry be removed from friendship. This command is to apply to all friendships but, somewhat surprisingly, family friendships (i.e. friendships inherited from one's father), other friendships with elders and friendships with benefactors are particularly singled out. One would have thought that competition was more likely to arise amongst friends of the same age and that there was less scope for rivalry between friends who are of different ages and positions in society. The point might be precisely that some rivalry may have to be admitted as inevitable among friends of the same age, even if it is not desirable, but that rivalry is totally inappropriate between friends whose ages and positions are radically different. A youth has no business competing with an elder nor an elder with a youth. In a fashion typical of the *Precepts*, a reason is then given for the precept: if competition is carried to extremes with people in such positions, then anger or some other emotion is likely to arise which will not be salutary for the friendship. The point is a good one. Anger may well arise in competitions between friends of the same age, but there is likely to be extra animus when the competition is between individuals of different age and status. The elder may well feel intense shame at failing to do well against the younger, while the young may see the position of the elder as unjustified. The conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon in the *Iliad* has some of these dynamics. For the Pythagoreans, however, as other precepts show, respect for elders and benefactors was particularly important, so that these relationships need to be protected.

The second precept asserts that as few as possible wounds and sores should arise in friendships. This precept is related to the previous one in that competition pushed too far has been shown to lead to such wounds.

On the other hand, wounds and sores can obviously arise from causes other than rivalry. Again anger is seen as a major cause of wounds, and hence a threat to friendship; both parties must know how to control anger and yield to the other. It is noticeable that once again the emphasis is on friendships between young and old. The danger for the younger member or the one who receives a benefaction is in becoming angry. At first sight, it might seem that it is just the high spirits of youth that are the danger, but, since the advice that follows for the elder focuses on the proper form of admonitions to the young, it is apparent that what is crucial is the younger person's ability to take advice and admonition from an elder or superior without becoming angry. On the other hand, the elder member or the benefactor must be careful that any correction or admonition directed at the younger member be carried out with the utmost tact, demonstrating genuine care for the younger person. The theme of the role of an older man in correcting a young boy also emerges in Plato's *Lysis*, where Socrates demonstrates the proper role of the older man in tactfully humbling the youth rather than trying to praise him to the sky as Hippothales has been doing (210e). There is nothing in this passage of the *Precepts*, however, to suggest that the Pythagoreans are thinking of an erotic relationship between an older man and his beloved boy rather than a relation between father and son or older and younger relatives.

The third precept is that trust should never be removed from friendship. This is paralleled in other Greek treatises on friendship, and it is a common observation at all times that friendship rests on trust. The Pythagoreans, however, characteristically take the point a step further by adding that trust cannot be undercut even in joking. Again this point is supported with a reason. If falsehood once enters the character of friends, the friendship cannot long survive. The worry is perhaps that if I carry out a practical joke on a friend, this may not only make that friend less likely to trust me in the future, but the deceit necessary to carry out the joke in some way corrupts my character. If I can be false in play why not for real? This makes the Pythagoreans out to be a pretty severe group, but it is true that there are not a lot of jokes associated with either Pythagoras or his followers in the ancient tradition.

The fourth precept is that no friendship should be renounced on account of misfortunes or disabilities that befall our friends. Great vice

in our friend is the only justifiable reason for renouncing a friendship. This is much in accord with the preceding three precepts all of which suggest that less than subtle admonitions from our friends or an occasional angry outburst are not good grounds for breaking off a friendship. The central point, however, is that a friend should not be abandoned if she falls into poverty, ill health or a similar misfortune. You are supposed to stick by your friends when they are down and out as long as they have not given themselves over to great vice.

The fifth precept then turns to enmity in general and urges that one not start an enmity except against those who are totally bad. At first sight this precept suggests some distance from the traditional Greek morality of helping friends and harming enemies by suggesting that you should have few enemies. On the other hand, what follows are a set of subsidiary precepts which suggest the proper way to carry out one's enmity, which would appear to fit well with the traditional friends and enemies morality. We are first told that, if we do begin an enmity, we should be steadfast and fight it through to the end, although this is tempered by the concession that this is only so if the character of your enemy does not change. Thus, it does not appear that an enemy must always remain an enemy. Next, it is oddly asserted that one must fight not with words but deeds. This precept would seem to lead to an escalation in hostilities, but if we remember that enmity is only allowed against those who are totally bad, perhaps the point is that real evil must be resisted by deeds and not just words. Things get stranger still with the next precept, that being an enemy is acceptable even to divine law, if one fights "as a human being with a human being." Now it sounds as if we are in the old west where fights were "man to man." In combination with the previous precept, however, the point may be that our enmities are not supposed to involve deceit or deception but that we should face evil directly. Finally, the theme of enmity is rounded out by returning to the first point: as far as possible never be responsible for a dispute. The precept goes further, to order that we be always on our guard against any source of dispute. In a sense, all of the precepts so far have been making this point by directing our attention to problems that can lead to the dissolution of friendship. So the Pythagorean tries at all costs to maintain his friendships and not to be an enemy to anyone but will fight strongly against vice. It should be noted that there is no absolute ban on fighting or indeed on killing articulated here, in contrast to some other passages in

the Pythagorean tradition which seem to completely reject war and killing (Iambl. *VP* 186). It would appear that the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* would be unlikely to support their city-state going to war frequently, but if the opposing state is truly acting unjustly, these Pythagoreans would support a war against it and could participate in the battles.

The sixth and final major precept in the fragment enjoins that, if we want a true friendship, there should be as many rules and agreed standards of behavior as possible. Such a view is in tension with popular American morality of the twenty-first century, which urges that friends should be allowed to be free to be themselves. The Pythagorean view seems to be rather that a true friendship only exists when there are clear rules and expectations for behavior, to which each member of the friendship adheres. Several subordinate precepts are quickly added. The rules and expectations should be well judged and not haphazard. Moreover, they are not written down but rather should become habitual. Why this emphasis on rules? The goal is that friendships should only arise with “reverence, consideration and proper order.” Friendships are not supposed to be based on emotion that is aroused haphazardly or casually. There is no explicit assertion here as to what the true basis of friendship is supposed to be. One might well suppose that it is virtue, given the emphasis on vice as the only legitimate reason for discarding a friend, but all that is explicitly asserted is that friendship should not be based on casual emotion. This is in agreement with the suspicion of emotion in general and anger in particular elsewhere in the precepts (frs. 8 and 9) and in the Pythagorean tradition (Archytas A7 and A9a). Evidently friendship should only be initiated on the basis of a careful judgment and involves a commitment to behave according to agreed rules and expectations.

Relation to the Tradition about Pythagorean Friendship Preserved Elsewhere

In the later tradition one of the things for which the Pythagoreans were most famous was friendship. Thus, Cicero makes repeated reference to Pythagorean friendship in his works (*De Fin.* 2.79, *Tusc.* 5.63, *Amic.* 23.88 and *Off.* 1.56) and Iamblichus has a full chapter devoted to friendship in his *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (Chapter 33 = sections 229–40). It is

more difficult to determine how much of this late tradition goes back to early Pythagoreanism. The earliest extant testimony about Pythagoras refers to his recognizing the voice of a friend in the yelps of a puppy that was being beaten (Xenophanes fr. 7). However, while this story is consistent with the emphasis on friendship in the later Pythagorean tradition, it does not in itself show that Pythagoras put any unusual emphasis on friendship, and certainly does not hint at his specific views on friendship. The earliest secure presentation of friendship in Pythagoreanism is the famous story of the friends Phintias and Damon. Iamblichus cites the story in his *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (VP 233–6). It is important to recognize that Iamblichus rather unusually gives his source for the story, Aristoxenus. He even specifies the work from which it comes, not the *Precepts*, but rather *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. Therefore, the story can be confidently assigned to the fourth century and need not be treated as an artifact of Hellenistic and later Pythagoreanism as some scholars have done (for references see Konstan 1997: 114–15).

As the first sentence of the fragment (fr. 31 Wehrli) shows, Aristoxenus presents the story not primarily to illustrate Pythagorean friendship but rather the Pythagoreans' avoidance of emotional behavior such as lamentations, tears, flattery, entreaty and supplication. Certain members of the court of the tyrant Dionysius II of Syracuse claimed that the Pythagoreans were braggarts and that their supposed dignity, trustworthiness and freedom from emotion would disappear when put to the test. To test their claim, Phintias is charged with treason by Dionysius. Phintias is astonished but asks for the rest of the day to settle his affairs and those of his friend Damon, since they live together. He says that Damon will stand security for him by taking his place. Dionysius doubts that anyone would do this for a friend, but Damon willingly does so. The members of the court then ridicule Damon assuming that Phintias will never return. To the astonishment of all Phintias does return and Dionysius asks to join their friendship as a third, but Damon and Phintias demure. Aristoxenus' introductory words suggest that he was most struck with the calm with which Phintias takes the judgment against him and settles his affairs and the equanimity with which Damon stands security for him. There are indeed no lamentations, tears or entreaty. Iamblichus, however, in introducing the quotation, takes its main lesson to be that the Pythagoreans avoided friendships with outsiders while remaining firm in their friendships with each other.

Yet another interpretation of the story is given by Cicero (*De Fin.* 2.79) who cites it to show that in friendship we value the friend not for any pleasure or utility that he brings but rather for himself. It can hardly be his own pleasure or utility that leads Damon to risk his life in this way.

Since Dionysius II was tyrant of Syracuse from 367–357 BC, the events concerning Damon and Phintias must have taken place during these years. The *Pythagorean Precepts* are likely to reflect the Pythagoreanism of Aristoxenus' teacher Xenophilus and the Pythagoreans that he knew at Phlius, whom he will have encountered at about this same time. Thus, we might expect that there would be significant overlap in outlook between the story of Damon and Phintias and what is said in the *Precepts*, although Damon and Phintias lived in Sicily rather than on the Greek mainland like the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts*. The story of Damon and Phintias does indeed illustrate two of the six basic precepts about friendship found in fragment 11. First, it is a prime example of the centrality of trust in friendship (precept 3 above). The "pretended trustworthiness" (προσποίητος πίστις – VP 234) of the Pythagoreans was precisely what Aristoxenus tells us was being put to the test by the accusation directed at Phintias. Both Damon and Phintias portray the virtue in spades, Damon by taking Phintias' place and Phintias by returning to face his death. Second, it also clearly illustrates the precept (number 4 above) that friendship should not be abandoned on account of the misfortune of a friend (e.g., Phintias' death sentence) but only on account of great vice. The refusal of Damon and Phintias to allow Dionysius to join their friendship also illustrates the avoidance of friendship with those who are guilty of great vice of the sort displayed by Dionysius in his false charge against Phintias. It is also true that the theme of Pythagorean lack of emotion, which is stressed by Aristoxenus in the story of Damon and Phintias, appears in the *Precepts*, which stress in several places that it is crucial not to rouse dangerous emotions in friendship (lines 6–7 and 35). None of the other main points of fragment 11 are prominent in the story of Damon and Phintias but nothing in the story is in conflict with those points either. It is interesting that fragment 11 particularly emphasizes friendships between the young and the old and that Phintias is explicitly identified as being older than Damon.

Apart from the story of Damon and Phintias, the other most prominent feature of the ancient tradition concerning Pythagorean

friendship are the reports that it was Pythagoras who first coined prominent Greek maxims about friendship, most notably “the things of friends are in common,” but also “the friend is another self” and “friendship is equality.” The historian of southern Italy, Timaeus of Tauromenium, is reported to have ascribed the first and the third to Pythagoras (*FGrHist* 566.13; Diog. Laert. 8.10). Antonius Diogenes (AD 100), as reported in Porphyry’s *Life of Pythagoras* (33), ascribed the first and the second to him. We have no evidence earlier than Timaeus (350–260 BC) for assigning these maxims to Pythagoras, and it appears unlikely that he, in fact, originated them. Certainly both Plato and Aristotle refer to the principle that “the things of friends are in common” numerous times without a hint that it originated with Pythagoras. It is described as something said of old (*Laws* 739c2–d5), and both of them describe it as a proverb (παροιμία – *Resp.* 424a, *Politics* 1263a30). We can either suppose that Timaeus had access to some source not available to Plato and Aristotle that showed decisively that Pythagoras originated the phrase or we can suppose that Timaeus or his source ascribed it back to Pythagoras because of his fame and because it fit with other things reported about Pythagorean friendship. Surely the latter possibility is much more likely given the repeatedly demonstrated tendency of the later tradition to make Pythagoras the inventor of central ideas in the Greek philosophical tradition, including the coinage of the word philosophy itself. Indeed, proverbs such as “the things of friends are in common” and “the friend is another self” are such common ideas in friendship at all times that it is unlikely that they were the “discovery” of any one individual.

The story of Damon and Phintias might have been one of the texts that led someone like Timaeus to ascribe the “things of friends are in common” to Pythagoras, since Damon and Phintias are described as living together and sharing all things (συνέζων ... καὶ ἐκοινώνουσι ἀπ’άντων – Iamblichus *VP* 235). Some scholars have also taken this text as evidence for a universal Pythagorean practice of communal property (Minar 1944), such as is also first attested in Timaeus (*FGrHist* 566.13) and evidently in his younger contemporary Epicurus (Diog. Laert. 10.11). Indeed, Timaeus might have been relying again on just this passage. But the story of Damon and Phintias only shows that they lived together and shared their goods without implying that this was a general Pythagorean rule. There is evidence for some Pythagoreans,

such as Damon and Phintias, sharing their property but also evidence for Pythagoreans having private fortunes and households, so it is doubtful that there was ever any universal Pythagorean communism (Burkert 1982: 15–17 = 2006: 208–10; see also Zhmud 2012a: 149–50, who is very sceptical about the practice). Certainly nothing in fragment 11 of the *Precepts* suggests an explicit Pythagorean principle according to which “the things of friends are in common” or any sort of communal property.

It is important to consider whether any antecedents of the account of friendship found in the *Precepts* can be seen in the earlier Pythagorean taboos known as *acusmata* and generally thought to go back to Pythagoras himself (Burkert 1972: 166–92). Indeed one way of understanding the *Precepts* is as a later, more rational set of rules designed to supplement and replace the *acusmata*. There is one *acusma* that was interpreted by the later tradition as applying to friendship. It reads “do not give your right hand to every man” (μὴ παντὶ ἐμβάλλειν δεξιάν). It is cited by Diogenes Laertius (8.17), Iamblichus (*Protr.* 21), Plutarch (*On Having Many Friends* 95f) and in the treatise on *The Education of Children* handed down in Plutarch’s *Moralia* (12f), but probably not by him. Iamblichus takes this as a warning not to greet or offer the right hand in aid to those who are unworthy or uninitiated, and Böhm (1905: 49) thinks it has its origin in fears of meeting strangers, which can be paralleled in many cultures. Plutarch and pseudo-Plutarch interpret it more simply as meaning “do not make many friends nor embrace a friendship that is too common and indiscriminate” (96a cf. 12f). Giving someone one’s right hand was a pledge of good faith, so that the *acusma* might simply enjoin being sparing with such pledges whether to friends or others, but certainly establishing a friendship was a signal act of such a pledge. As the discussion above shows, fragment 11 of the *Precepts* is very much in accord with this recommendation to have few friends, insofar as it recommends that “no association arise negligently or haphazardly, but with reverence, consideration and proper order.” It does seem plausible, then, that this section of the *Precepts* was an elaboration and rationalization of a much simpler early Pythagorean prohibition on having many friends. This prohibition seems borne out in the story of Damon and Phintias, where the friends are presented as if their friendship was exclusive, and where expansion of the friendship to Dionysius is rejected. The idea that we can or should have only a few true friends is, of course, shared by Aristotle, but none of the specifics of

the discussion in the *Precepts* corresponds to the details of Aristotle's discussion, which emphasizes the difficulty of living together with more than a few friends (*EN* 1171a1–2), so it does not appear that the *Precepts* owe anything to Aristotle on this point, nor that Aristotle is particularly relying on the Pythagorean view.

Finally, there are a number of aphorisms about friendship that are ascribed to Pythagoras or the Pythagoreans in the later tradition and it is natural to consider what connection there is between them and the account of friendship in the *Precepts*. Certainly Diodorus Siculus' statement (10.8.1) that the Pythagoreans gave the greatest forethought to the stability or steadfastness of friendship would be a good description of much of what is said in the *Precepts*; all six main points developed in the *Precepts* can more or less plausibly be described as directed at ensuring the stability of friendship. Nonetheless, Diodorus' word for stability (βεβαιότης) is not found in the *Precepts*, so it is not clear how much he is relying on the *Precepts*. Diodorus adds that the Pythagoreans thought that the goodwill (εὐνοία) of friends is the most important good in life. We might imagine that the Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* would agree, but there is no explicit assertion to this effect.

The *Golden Verses*, which were ascribed to Pythagoras and served as a prominent, if brief (71 lines), compendium of his wisdom in the later tradition, also mention friendship. Thom (1995: 35–58) would date them to the fourth century BC, since one line from them (54) appears already in Chrysippus in the third century. However, Chrysippus does not say that the line is from the *Golden Verses* and since the *Golden Verses* are a compendium of earlier ideas, it is not surprising that a gnomic line that later became incorporated in them should already be in circulation in the time of Chrysippus. On the whole it seems more likely that they belong to the first century BC or AD, since the first quotation of more than a line does not appear until AD 100 and they are not referred to by name until AD 200 (Flinterman 2014: 342). Friendship appears prominently near the beginning of the *Verses* (lines 5–8). Line 5 asserts that we should choose as friends those who excel in virtue. The Pythagoreans of the *Precepts* would perhaps agree, but there is no explicit mention of virtue in connection with friendship in the *Precepts*. In the next line of the *Golden Verses* (line 6), however, there appears to be a strong connection to the *Precepts*. The line reads “yield to his [i.e. the friend's] gentle words and useful actions” (tr. Thom 1995). As Thom rightly

emphasizes in his commentary on the *Golden Verses* (1995: 121–3), the gentle words and useful actions are best understood as the guidance offered by a friend. The *Precepts* similarly put great emphasis on tact in admonitions to friends, advising that “solicitude and propriety be very manifest in those who give admonitions.” The *Precepts* suggest that, done in this way, admonitions will be useful (ὠφέλιμον) just as the *Golden Verses* refer to “the useful (ἐπωφελίμοισι) actions of friends.” Moreover, lines 7–8 go on to advise that we should not hate our friend for a small fault, for as long as we are able. This recommendation is very much in accord with the *Precepts*’ admonition that we only abandon a friend because of great vice (line 22). It thus seems not unlikely that the *Precepts* form at least some of the background to lines 6–8 of the *Golden Verses*. Thom notes the connections to Iamblichus (1995: 122) but does not recognize that Iamblichus is here drawing on Aristoxenus.

Finally, the topic of friendship also appears in later collections known as *Pythagorean Sentences*. These appear in manuscripts of Byzantine times but clearly already existed in some form in the times of Porphyry and Stobaeus and probably arose in Neopythagorean circles, since these authors preserve some of them (Chadwick 1959: 140–4). One example can serve to illustrate the relation of such collections to the *Precepts*. *Pythagorean Sentences* #33 (Chadwick) says “regard those who help you towards wisdom as most of all friends.” This sentiment is generally in accord with what is said in the *Precepts*, but the connection is too slight to suggest that the *Precepts* had any role in the formation of these *Pythagorean Sentences*.

Parallels with Other Treatments of Friendship in the Ancient Tradition

It is striking how few explicit parallels there are between this account of friendship and what is found elsewhere in the ancient tradition concerning friendship. It is not that the account of friendship in the *Precepts* is radically at odds with what is said in the tradition, although there are some disagreements. It is more a difference in approach. There are a few clear parallels that should be noted first. The clearest similarity is in the precept that trust (πίστις) cannot be removed from friendship. Thus, in the *Eudemian Ethics* at 1237b12 Aristotle asserts that “there is no stable friendship without trust” (πίστις). Aristotle does not stress as the

Pythagoreans do that trust cannot be undercut even in play and instead develops a point not mentioned by the Pythagoreans, that trust is based on the test of time. Arius Didymus in his summary of Stoic ethics preserved by Stobaeus also asserts that “true friendship . . . cannot exist apart from trust (πίστις) and stability” (*Stob.* 2.7.11 m). These parallels are not particularly significant, however, since the idea that friendship relies on trust is a commonplace and nothing in the distinctive way in which this idea is developed in the *Precepts* is paralleled elsewhere. Again some texts in the ancient tradition agree with the *Precepts* in recognizing that competition between friends should be avoided. Thus Plutarch, in the treatise *How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend*, asserts that for true friends there is neither rivalry (ζῆλος) nor jealousy (φθόνος) (54c). Cicero, in *De Amicitia* (10.34), talks of friendships that are broken off by rivalry (*contentione*) of some sort. The similarity here is again quite general with little specific connection even in language (the *Precepts* use ἀγῶνά τε καὶ φιλονεικίαν). Plato, on the other hand, seems to disagree with the Pythagoreans and to accept that some sorts of rivalry are legitimate in friendship, at least among friends of the same age, since he portrays sympathetically the rivalry between Menexenus and Lysis as to who is the nobler (*Ly.* 207c) and implies that they might also reasonably compete to see who is juster or wiser (*Ly.* 207d). Some scholars (Staab 2002: 429 and n. 1062) have thought that the precept urging avoidance of enmity was dependent in some important way on Plato’s view that the members of the state should avoid faction and be friends to one another (*Resp.* 470c, *Leg.* 628b), but the similarities here are only of the most general sort and the details of the language of the passages are not at all alike.

Finally, the *Precepts*’ assertion that renunciation of a friendship is only acceptable on account of great vice has some clear similarities to Aristotle’s discussion of what we should do when a man, who became our friend as a good man, becomes bad (*EN* 1165b13–22). However, Aristotle’s account is much more complicated because of his distinction of types of friends. Renunciation of friendships based on utility and pleasure is declared perfectly natural if the friend is no longer useful or agreeable (*EN* 1165b1–3). In the case of friendships based on virtue Aristotle suggests that the friendship should only be broken off if the friend is incurably bad, a position that is close to what is found in the *Precepts*. He later admits, however, that it is natural to break off the

friendship with a man who has become bad, whether incurable or not, because it was not with such a man that the friendship was formed.

Most significantly there are no parallels which would suggest that Aristoxenus wrote the *Precepts* by plundering the ideas of Aristotle and Plato for the glory of the Pythagoreans, which, following Wehrli, has been the standard view of the *Precepts*. There is no mention of the major components of Aristotle's definition of friendship (*EN* 1156a), such as wishing another good for his own sake (*EN* 1156b9–10), no mention of the three grounds for friendship (the good, the pleasant and the useful – *EN* 1155b18–19) and the corresponding three types of friendship (virtue, pleasure and utility) for which Aristotle is famous. The *Precepts* are innocent of a number of other central Aristotelian preoccupations (e.g., whether we should love ourselves 1168a28–9 or whether friendship is necessary for happiness 1169b 3–4). Similarly, none of the central issues in the discussion of friendship in Plato's *Lysis*, such as whether friendship arises among likes or unlikes, appear in the *Precepts*. If Aristoxenus' goal had been to glorify the Pythagoreans by assigning them important Aristotelian and Platonic ideas on friendship, he would have failed miserably. There are also some surprising dissimilarities between Aristotle's account and what we find in the *Precepts*. In several places Aristotle stresses the role of proportion and equality in friendship (e.g., *EN* 1163b32–3, *EE* 1242b). Given the interest of Pythagoreans such as Archytas in proportion, one might have supposed that Aristotle derived some of this from Pythagorean accounts of friendship. The *Precepts* dash these expectations, however, since there is no reference to any mathematical concepts such as proportion and equality, although there is some mention of boundaries and limits.

One of the reasons that there are so few similarities between the *Precepts* and Plato and Aristotle is that this surviving passage from the *Precepts* focuses on practical advice on how to maintain a friendship. It is assumed that friendship of various sorts is valuable and there is no analysis of the concept of friendship *per se*, whereas such an analysis is at the core of the Platonic and Aristotelian treatments. It is important to emphasize that the *Precepts* may well have contained such an analytical discussion of friendship in a passage that has been lost. Such analyses of the concepts of luck (fr. 7) and desire (fr. 3) survive. Moreover, the reference to "true friendship" in fragment 11 perhaps suggests the existence of an analytic account that outlined varieties of friendship.

The treatment of friendships in the *Precepts*, rather than following a plan like Plato's and Aristotle's largely theoretical accounts, may have been more like what is found in Cicero's *De Amicitia* (4.16). There, Laelius is asked to provide both an account of the nature of friendship (*qualem existemes*) and also what precepts he would give concerning its practice (*quae praecepta des*). This similarity in format may explain why the *Precepts* show a few more parallels with the *De Amicitia* than with Plato and Aristotle, but the similarities are still not marked enough to suggest that Cicero was making direct use of the *Precepts*. In addition to the passage discussed above, which mentions rivalry as a cause of the dissolution of friendship, Cicero does take up another theme, which is prominent in the *Precepts*: the proper way to give advice in friendship (24–5). It might be that the *Precepts* form part of the background to Cicero's remarks on this theme, but the connections do not suggest that he was making close use of it. Cicero's emphasis on the need for frankness and avoidance of flattery are missing in the *Precepts*. His recommendation that advice be given in a spirit of good will (*benevole*) is parallel to the emphasis on solicitude (τὸ κηδεμονικόν) in the *Precepts*, but his emphasis on avoiding harshness (*acerbitas* 24.89, *aspere* 25.91), while certainly consistent with the *Precepts*, finds no precise parallel. Cicero also shows some similarity to the *Precepts*' resistance to breaking off a friendship once begun, when he insists that if we have formed a friendship, even if we find that we have made a mistake, we should endure rather than look for grounds for a breach (16.60).

Is it possible to say what analysis of friendship the *Precepts* gave or at least implicitly assumed? Why did the Pythagoreans think that we should enter into friendships? Was friendship a good in itself or did it only have instrumental value as leading to some other good? Given the Pythagorean emphasis on accepting traditional values elsewhere in the *Precepts*, it may well be that certain friendships were recognized as arising from the human condition and hence as not needing further explanation. Thus, we will inevitably have friendships with our parents and with other relatives and older members of the community, who in some way benefit us. Thus, there is no attempt such as is found in Plato's *Lysis* (207e–210d) to explain the foundation for the relationship between parents and children. That the Pythagoreans were particularly thinking about such friendships is suggested by the constant reference throughout the passage to friendships between the young and old. Beyond these

sorts of friendships, the Pythagoreans clearly adopt a cautious attitude. It appears that towards the mass of humanity the goal is to avoid initiating any enmities, although evil must be resolutely resisted. When should a friendship be initiated? The central point is that one should only become a friend after careful consideration and that a friendship should not be based on casual emotion. This would appear to rule out most of Aristotle's friendships for pleasure, and indeed the Pythagoreans elsewhere say that nothing should be done for the sake of pleasure (fr. 9). Similarly, since the *Precepts* say that friendships should not be abandoned because of the misfortunes or disabilities of friends, it appears that the primary motive is not supposed to be material gain or utility. It would appear then that the primary motive for initiating a friendship must be virtue, although nothing like this is explicitly asserted. In summary the Pythagoreans seem to think that friendships arise in one of two ways: 1) naturally and without any real choice with our elders, whether they be family members or benefactors of some sort, 2) of our free choice with others, presumably mostly of our own age. The latter sort of friend will be rare since we should only enter into such friendships with great circumspection. In both cases it would appear that friendship is seen as a good in itself, since it is only to be renounced in cases where great evil arises in the character of a friend. It is our duty to preserve both sorts of friendship to the best of our ability. Indeed, most of the precepts on friendship are practical advice as to how to preserve our friendships. It is not expected that we will be friends to most people, although we must endeavor to avoid enmity with them. On the other hand, we must be resolute in fighting evil.

Detailed Commentary

Line 3 – πατρικῆς [φιλίας]: At first sight the command to remove rivalry from τῆς πατρικῆς [φιλίας] καὶ καθόλου ἐκ τῆς πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους seems to suggest that friendship with one's father is being contrasted with friendship with elders in general. This is what presumably led Dillon and Hershbelle (1991) to translate πατρικῆς [φιλίας] as "friendship with one's father" (Iambl. VP 101) and "paternal friendship" (Iambl. VP 230) and Clark (1989) as "friendship . . . for one's father." I have been unable to find any parallels for the expression meaning "friendship for one's father." All of the parallels suggest that the expression means "a friendship of one's father," i.e. "a friendship inherited from one's

father” or “a family friendship.” Thus, in Plato’s *Laches*, Lysimachus refers to Socrates as a πατρικός . . . φίλος which he goes on to explain as meaning that Socrates was a friend of Lysimachus, because Socrates’ father Sophroniscus had been Lysimachus’ friend. Thus, Socrates had inherited a friendship with Lysimachus through his father. Lysimachus was a friend of the family. Similarly, in his oration to Demonicus, Isocrates says that Demonicus has inherited his father’s friendship just as he inherits his estate, and the term for “his father’s friendship” is again τῆς φιλίας τῆς πατρικῆς. There are a number of other similar passages (e.g., Isoc. *Aegin*. 50.3; Plato, *Meno* 92d; Aristot. *Ath.* 28.5; Aristoph. *Av.* 142), but I can find no parallel for the expression meaning “friendship with one’s father.” Accordingly I have translated the expression as “friendship with family friends” and indeed this translation works just as well with the following phrase “and in general . . . friendship towards elders” as the translation “friendship with one’s father” did, since all family friends will be elders.

Line 7 – σωτήριον: For the concept of “safety” in the *Pythagorean Precepts* see the commentary on fragment 2, line 2. Here the meaning simply seems to be that the friendship will not be preserved, i.e. will not survive, if intense rivalry with its attendant strong emotions enters it.

Line 8 – ἀμυχάς τε καὶ ἑλκώσεις: This precise combination is not found elsewhere in Greek literature. This is in part because ἀμυχή is not a common noun in any period. It does appear in the fourth century in Demosthenes and the Hippocratic Corpus. *Internal Affections* 32.5 is the closest parallel: ἀμυχάς are described as coming to be ἑλκεα. Thus in some contexts an ἀμυχή is understood to be a wound that is not necessarily serious but that can turn into a festering sore or ulceration (ἑλκος or ἑλκωσις). Iamblichus does not use ἀμυχή outside this passage and uses ἑλκωσις in only one other passage (163 = 244), a passage that some scholars have argued to derive from Aristoxenus (see the commentary on fr. 9, section 5). It thus appears that ἀμυχάς τε καὶ ἑλκώσεις is likely to be Aristoxenus’ original language.

Line 11 – τὰς ἐπανορθώσεις τε καὶ νοουθήσεις: This combination of adjectives does not appear elsewhere, but both nouns are individually paralleled in fourth-century authors.

Lines 11–12 – ἃς δὴ πεδαρτάσεις ἐκάλουν ἐκείνοι: As we have seen above, Iamblichus quotes this passage of the *Precepts* twice, in section 101 and in section 231. In section 231 the reading of the best manuscript F is πεδαρτάσεις, while the later manuscripts and all manuscripts in section 101 read παιδαρτάσεις. Clearly, πεδαρτάσεις is the *lectio difficilior*. It in fact makes sense as a Doric form. In the Doric dialect as in the Aeolic, πεδά is equivalent to the preposition μετά in Attic.

So the form is a compound of this preposition and the root ἄρτ- seen in the verb ἄρτάω, which means “to fasten” or “to attach” and perhaps also in ἄρτέομαι, which appears already in Herodotus (5.120) with the meaning “prepare.” Cobet (1878: 365) suggests that the meaning is the same as μεθαρμόζειν or μεταρρυθμίζειν, i.e. “change the form of,” “remodel,” “reform.” As with μεθαρμόζειν there may be an allusion to a musical sense of “retune” or “change mode.” Thus the noun would mean “reform” with an allusion to “re-tuning.” In section 197, Iamblichus in fact uses the verb form. He is reporting the Pythagorean refusal to punish when angry. He says that Pythagoreans waited until their ability to think rationally was restored and then adds parenthetically, “for they used the term ‘retune’ rather than ‘admonish’” (ἐκάλουν δὲ τὸ νουθετεῖν πεδαρτᾶν). In this passage all the manuscripts read παιδαρτᾶν. However, the reading παιδαρτᾶν here and the reading παιδαρτάσεις in all the manuscripts in section 101 and some manuscripts in 231 are clearly attempts to correct an unfamiliar Doric form to something more intelligible. Since the passage is dealing with the proper way to admonish children, it was natural for an interpreter puzzled by the Doric form to suppose that instead of πεδ- the prefix παιδ- deriving from the Greek word for child should be used. Hemsterhusius, as reported by Cobet (1847: 60), was the first to read παιδαρτᾶν in section 197.

Diogenes Laertius (8.20) has the same report as is found in section 197 of Iamblichus. Here all the manuscripts read ἐκάλει δὲ τὸ νουθετεῖν πελαργᾶν. Πελαργᾶν is unintelligible, despite a fanciful attempt to relate it to the stork’s unusual solicitude for its young; see Staab for a discussion (2002: 397, n. 973). It is most readily explained as a corruption arising from a miscopying of the Doric form πεδαρτᾶν, which made no sense to the copyist. This corruption then made its way into the *Suda*, where there is an entry for πελαργᾶν (entry 929 under the letter pi), which is glossed as τὸ νουθετεῖν ἐκάλει ὁ Πυθαγόρας.

Delatte (1922b: 191–2) points out that in section 197 Iamblichus seems to explain the usage not in terms of the manner in which the admonition is made, nor in terms of the change in attitude of the young person but rather in terms of the state of mind of the person making the admonition. Iamblichus says that “no Pythagorean either punished a slave or admonished a free person while in the grip of anger, but all of them waited for the restoration of their rational thought processes.” Iamblichus then adds the parenthetical remark, “for they called admonishing retuning” before continuing “for they made their wait in calm and silence.” It appears that Iamblichus is explaining πεδαρτάω as referring to the “restoration” (ἀποκατάστασιν) or “retuning” of the thought processes, which is a perfectly intelligible way of understanding πεδαρτάω and in fact confirms the interpretation of it as meaning something like μεθαρμόζω. The γάρ in the last sentence, however, seems at first sight to indicate that this sentence too is intended to explain the use of πεδαρτάω. It is very hard, however, to see how it

can do so. The use of ἀναμονήν, in “making their wait” is a clear allusion back to “waiting” (ἀνέμενεν) in the sentence before the parenthetical comment. Yet, this allusion would suggest that the phrase is explaining the term πεδαρτάω in terms of the calm and silence of the wait, but there is nothing in the term that suggests these ideas. It thus seems better to suppose that this last sentence ignores the parenthetical remark and is not intended as an explanation of it but rather further explicates the sentence preceding the parenthetical remark, by explaining what the Pythagoreans did during their wait in order to restore their thought processes. The connection of πεδαρτάω to the Pythagoreans’ “restoration” of their thought processes, whether it is due to Iamblichus or one of his sources, while confirming the meaning of πεδαρτάω as something like “retuning” may be a misapplication of the term from its more proper reference to the “retuning” of the soul of the young person who is corrected. That the proper reference is to the soul of the young is suggested by the use of the noun πεδαρτάσεις in sections 101 and 231, so that Iamblichus or his source may be trying to make a secondary and more fanciful connection to the settling down of the soul of the angry master. Or, perhaps the idea is that the soul of the master must be in the proper attunement in order for the soul of the erring student to be properly “retuned.”

Line 15 – κηδεμονικόν: This adjective, here used substantively with the article (“solicitude”), first appears elsewhere in Polybius (fr. 80). However, it does not seem likely to be Iamblichus’ word, since it appears nowhere else in his writings. The noun κηδεμονία, “solicitude,” is found in the *Republic* 463d and the agent noun κηδεμών appears already in Homer (*Il.* 23.163) and again in the *Republic* at 412c, so it seems not unlikely that the Pythagoreans used the adjective form.

Lines 15–16 – εὐσχήμονά τε γίνεσθαι καὶ ὠφέλιμον: The vocabulary here matches key terms used elsewhere in the *Precepts*. See fragment 9, lines 67–9 where the seemingly (εὐσχημον) and the beneficial (ὠφέλιμον) are identified as the first and second most important goals of all action.

Line 18 – διυγιαίνει: The verb διυγιαίνω appears only here and one other place (Plutarch *Advice about Keeping Well* 135c) in all of Greek literature. Its appearance in Plutarch does not show that the word is late. It is more likely that it is just a rare word at all times. The simple verb υγιαίνω is common in the fifth and fourth centuries and there is no problem in supposing that the Pythagoreans of the fourth century or Aristoxenus used this rare compound of it.

Line 21 – ἀπόγνωσις: The earliest appearance elsewhere of ἀπόγνωσις is in the first century BC in Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Diodorus. The related verb

ἀπογινώσκω, which is used one line earlier, is, however, used in the same sense of “renounce” or “give up on” already in Demosthenes 6.16 and Aristotle, *EN* 1152b. This is the only appearance of the word in Iamblichus.

Lines 22–3 – **κακίαν μεγάλην [τε καὶ ἀνεπανόρθωτον]**: The second adjective is likely to be an addition by Iamblichus. See the discussion of the extent of the fragment above and the commentary on fragment 9, line 8, where the adjective is used again.

Lines 27–8 – **νόμιμον δὲ εἶναι καὶ ὅσιον τὸν πολέμιον, εἰ ὥς ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ πολεμήσειεν**: I have been unable to find any parallel for the expression ὥς ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ πολεμήσειεν. There are several passages in Aristotle where the expression ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ is found. In these cases the emphasis is on the fact that two human beings are bound together by being of the same species. Thus at *EN* 1155a22, Aristotle says that even when we travel abroad we notice that “human being is kin and friend to human being” (οἰκεῖον ἅπας ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ καὶ φίλον) and at *Rhetoric* 1371b4 he says that “all things akin and alike are for the most part pleasant to each other, as human being to human being, horse to horse.” It is hard to know, however, if that emphasis on sameness of species would carry over into an expression governed by “to fight.” If it does, then the precept seems to say that we should fight always with the awareness that we are confronting another human being. This might be an appeal to fight humanely or in such a way as “to preserve human dignity” as De Vogel suggests (1966: 156). In such a case a person might have pity on his opponent even if he is winning a fair fight. It also might be an appeal to fight fairly. Against an animal, which has much different physical abilities than humans do, it might be reasonable to use whatever tactics necessary to survive, but against a human being, who has the same capabilities, only tactics that are available to both combatants are admissible. The notion that we are to fight straightforwardly without any underhanded tactics would be in accord with the immediately preceding precept that we should fight with deeds and not words, where the point may partly be that we should not fight by use of slander or empty words.

Line 31 – **τὰ ὠρισμένα καὶ νενομισμένα**: This exact combination is not found elsewhere. Things that are ὠρισμένα are defined (Arist. *EN* 1170a16), demarcated and limited (Arist. *Metaph.* 1002b18). Things that are νενομισμένα are commonly agreed to (Hdt. 2.17.6) and in accord with customary practice (Hdt. 1.35). Thus the Pythagoreans stress that in true friendships proper behavior should not be left undetermined but rather should be clearly defined and in accordance with customary practice. This is very much what we would expect given the Pythagorean emphasis on adhering to the customs and laws of their fathers in fragment 8, lines 25–7.

Lines 32–3 – **καὶ εἰς ἕθος ἕκαστον κατακεχωρισμένον δεῖν εἶναι**: It is important to note that *κατακεχωρισμένον* is singular and thus does not agree with the neuter plurals that have been the subject in the first part of the sentence. Instead it agrees with *ἕκαστον*, which is the subject of this part of the sentence and does not modify *ἕθος*: “[they said] that it was necessary that each [of the defined and customary practices]...” There is no precise parallel for the expression *εἰς ἕθος ... κατακεχωρισμένον ... εἶναι*. In two passages in the *Laws* (808c2 and 834d6) Plato uses *εἶμι* (to go) with *εἰς ἕθος* to indicate that something becomes a habit. Diodorus (1.86.5.8) uses *εἰς ἕθος* with *κατατάσσω* (arrange) of establishing a custom. The verb used here in the *Precepts*, *καταχωρίζω*, appears in active forms in Xenophon primarily in reference to “placing” things or soldiers in their correct position (e.g., *Cyropaedia* 2.2.8) and in the passive of a group of soldiers taking up a position (*Cyropaedia* 8.5.2). Thus, it seems most likely that the expression in the *Precepts* is parallel to those in Plato and Diodorus and means “take its place as a habit” or more idiomatically “be established as a habit.” The verb does not appear elsewhere in Iamblichus except in a quotation from the pseudo-Pythagorean text *On Wisdom* (“Archytas” 44.35 Thesleff 1965 = Periktione 146.22) at *Protrepticus* (22.24 Pistelli 1888), so it is not likely to be a word introduced by Iamblichus.

Line 33 – **ὁμιλία**: This word refers in general to social intercourse (LSJ s.v.) between the two friends (cf. fr. 10 of the *Precepts*). They are not supposed to associate negligently or without plan. Presumably this means that they are not supposed to “just hang out,” in contemporary terminology, but only associate under defined circumstances or for specific purposes. So it would be appropriate to associate for study, or for a formal meal or in order to exercise or to perform a service for a friend.

Lines 34–5 – **μετ’ αἰδοῦς τε καὶ συννοίας καὶ τάξεως ὀρθῆς**: The term *τάξις* is key to the Pythagorean conception of the good life in general. In fragment 8, lines 14–16, the Pythagoreans assert that because of their basically hubristic nature human beings need the supervision of the gods in order for temperance and order (*τάξις*) to arise. Again in fragment 2, they assert that children should even be fed in an orderly way, since order (*τάξις*) and due proportion are both fine and advantageous, whereas disorder (*ἀταξία*) is shameful and harmful. Indeed the natural failing of children is to avoid the whole class of things that are serious and orderly (*τάξεως* – fr. 9, line 32). So in friendship as in the rest of life proper order is crucial.

Lines 35–6 – **μήτε πάθος ἐγείρηται μηδὲν εἰκὴ καὶ φαύλως καὶ ἡμαρτημένως**: The language here has connections to other sections of the *Precepts*. The emphasis on not allowing any relationship or emotion to arise without

plan (εἰκῆ) is paralleled in fragment 9, lines 169–71, where the Pythagoreans complain that human beings often procreate without plan (εἰκῆ) even though those who breed animals would never breed them without plan. Thus, the Pythagoreans are unusual in thinking that we can make our friendships, sexual relationships and indeed our emotions arise in an orderly way.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Subsidiary Precepts 1: Avoid Crowds in the Morning, and 2: Avoid Hunting (S1 and S2)

Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, 96–100 – An Excerpt from Aristoxenus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*.

Περὶ δὲ τῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων, ἃ παρέδωκε δι' ὅλης ἡμέρας τοῖς 1
ἐταίροις, μετὰ τοῦτο φράσω· κατὰ γὰρ τὴν ὑφήγησιν 2
(96) αὐτοῦ ὧδε ἔπρασσον οἱ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ὁδηγούμενοι. 3
4
τοὺς μὲν ἑωθινούς περιπάτους ἐποιοῦντο οἱ ἄνδρες οὗτοι κατὰ 5
μόνας τε καὶ εἰς τοιούτους τόπους, ἐν οἷς συνέβαινεν ἡρεμίαν τε 6
καὶ ἡσυχίαν εἶναι σύμμετρον, ὅπου τε ἱερὰ καὶ ἄλση καὶ ἄλλη τις 7
θυμηδία. **ῶντο γὰρ δεῖν μὴ πρότερόν τινι συντυγχάνειν, πρὶν 8**
ἢ τὴν ἰδίαν ψυχὴν καταστήσουσι καὶ συναρμόσονται τὴν 9
διάνοιαν· ἀρμόδιον δὲ εἶναι τῇ καταστάσει τῆς διανοίας τὴν 10
τοιαύτην ἡσυχίαν. τὸ γὰρ εὐθύς ἀναστάντας εἰς τοὺς ὄχλους 11
ὠθεῖσθαι θορυβῶδες ὑπειλήφεισαν. διὸ δὴ πάντες οἱ 12
Πυθαγόρειοι τοὺς ἱεροπρεπεστάτους τόπους αἰεὶ ἐξελέγοντο. 13
μετὰ δὲ τὸν ἑωθινὸν περίπατον τότε πρὸς ἀλλήλους 14
ἐνετύγχανον, μάλιστα μὲν ἐν ἱεροῖς, εἰ δὲ μὴ γε, ἐν ὁμοίοις 15
τόποις. ἐχρῶντο δὲ τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ πρὸς τε διδασκαλίας καὶ 16
μαθήσεις καὶ πρὸς (97) τὴν τῶν ἡθῶν ἐπανόρθωσιν. μετὰ δὲ τὴν 17
τοιαύτην διατριβὴν ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν σωμάτων ἐτρέποντο 18
θεραπείαν. ἐχρῶντο δὲ ἀλείμματα τε καὶ δρόμοις οἱ πλεῖστοι, 19
ἐλάττονες καὶ πάλαις ἐν τε κήποις καὶ ἐν ἄλσεσιν, οἱ δὲ καὶ 20
ἀλθηροβολίᾳ ἢ χειρονομίᾳ, πρὸς τὰς τῶν σωμάτων ἰσχυρὰς 21
εὐθeta ἐπιτηδεύοντες ἐκλέγεσθαι γυμνάσια. ἀριστῶ δὲ ἐχρῶντο 22
ἄρτῳ καὶ μέλιτι ἢ κηρίῳ, οἶνου δὲ μεθ' ἡμέραν οὐ μετεῖχον. τὸν δὲ 23
μετὰ τὸ ἄριστον χρόνον περὶ τὰς πολιτικὰς οἰκονομίας 24
κατεγίνοντο, περὶ τε τὰς ἐξωτικὰς καὶ τὰς ξενικὰς, διὰ τὴν τῶν 25

νόμων πρόσταξιν· πάντα γὰρ ἐν ταῖς μετ' ἄριστον ὥραις 26
ἐβούλοντο διοικεῖν. δείλης δὲ γινομένης εἰς τοὺς περιπάτους 27
πάλιν ὁρμᾶν, οὐχ ὁμοίως κατ' ἰδίαν, ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ ἔωθινῳ 28
περιπάτῳ, ἀλλὰ σύνδυο καὶ σύντρεις ποιεῖσθαι τὸν 29
περίπατον, ἀναμνησκόμενους τὰ μαθήματα **(98)** καὶ 30
ἐγγυμαζομένους τοῖς καλοῖς ἐπιτηδεύμασι. μετὰ δὲ τὸν 31
περίπατον λουτρῷ χρῆσθαι, λουσαμένους τε ἐπὶ τὰ συσσίτια 32
ἀπαντᾶν· ταῦτα δ' εἶναι μὴ πλεῖον ἢ δέκα ἀνθρώπους 33
συνευωχεῖσθαι. ἀθροισθέντων δὲ τῶν συσσιτούντων γίνεσθαι 34
σπονδὰς τε καὶ θυσίας θυημάτων τε καὶ λιβανωτοῦ. ἔπειτα ἐπὶ 35
τὸ δεῖπνον χωρεῖν, ὡς πρὸ ἡλίου δύσεως ἀποδεδειπνηκέναι. 36
χρῆσθαι δὲ καὶ οἶνῳ καὶ μάζῃ καὶ ἄρτῳ καὶ ὄψῳ καὶ λαχάνοις 37
ἐφθοῖς τε καὶ ὠμοῖς. παρατίθεσθαι δὲ κρέα ζώων θυσίμων 38
[ἱερείων], τῶν δὲ θαλασσίων ὄψων σπανίως [χρῆσθαι]· εἶναι 39
γὰρ τινὰ αὐτῶν δι' αἰτίας τινὰς **(99)** οὐ χρήσιμα πρὸς τὸ 40
χρῆσθαι. μετὰ δὲ τόδε τὸ δεῖπνον ἐγίνοντο σπονδαί, ἔπειτα 41
ἀνάγνωσις ἐγίνετο. ἔθος δ' ἦν τὸν μὲν νεώτατον ἀναγινώσκειν, 42
τὸν δὲ πρεσβύτατον ἐπιστατεῖν ὃ δεῖ ἀναγινώσκειν καὶ ὡς δεῖ. 43
ἐπεὶ δὲ μέλλοιεν ἀπιέναι, σπονδὴν αὐτοῖς ἐνέχει ὁ οἰνοχόος, 44
σπεισάντων δὲ ὁ πρεσβύτατος παρήγγελλε τάδε· ἡμερον 45
φυτὸν καὶ ἔγκαρπον μῆτε βλάπτειν μῆτε φθεῖρειν, ὡσαύτως δὲ 46
καὶ ζῶον, ὃ μὴ πέφυκε βλαβερὸν τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῳ γένει, μῆτε 47
(100) βλάπτειν μῆτε φθεῖρειν. ἔτι πρὸς τοῦτοις περὶ τοῦ 48
θεῖου καὶ περὶ τοῦ δαιμονίου καὶ περὶ τοῦ ἡρωικοῦ γένους 49
εὐφημόν τε καὶ ἀγαθὴν ἔχειν διάνοιαν, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ περὶ 50
γονέων τε καὶ εὐεργετῶν διανοεῖσθαι, νόμῳ τε βοηθεῖν καὶ 51
ἀνομίᾳ πολεμεῖν. τούτων δὲ ῥηθέντων ἀπιέναι ἕκαστον εἰς 52
οἶκον. ἐσθῆτι δὲ χρῆσθαι λευκῇ καὶ καθαρᾷ, ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ 53
στρώμασι λευκοῖς τε καὶ καθαροῖς. εἶναι δὲ τὰ στρώματα ἱμάτια 54
λινᾶ· κωδίοις γὰρ οὐ χρῆσθαι. **περὶ δὲ θήραν οὐ δοκιμάζειν** 55
καταγίνεσθαι, οὐδὲ χρῆσθαι τοιοῦτῳ γυμνασίῳ. 56
57
τὰ μὲν οὖν ἐφ' ἡμέρᾳ ἐκάστη τῷ πλήθει τῶν ἀνδρῶν 58
παραδιδόμενα εἷς τε τροφήν καὶ τὴν τοῦ βίου διαγωγὴν 59
τοιαῦτα ἦν. 60

- 12 ὑπειλήφεισαν] Küster ὑπειλήφισαν F
 21 ἀλτηροβολίᾳ] Arcerius in Westermann ἀρτηροβολίᾳ F
 39 ἱερείων] del. Cobet κρέας ἱερείων θυσίμων Porphyry VP 34
 χρῆσθαι] del. Scaliger 44 ἀπιέναι] Küster ἀπεῖναι F 52 ἀπιέναι]
 Küster ἀπεῖναι F 59 διαγωγῇ] Cobet ἀναγωγῇ Mss.

Translation

I will next speak about the practices that he handed down to his associates to be followed throughout the whole day. For those guided by him acted in accordance with his direction in the following way.

These men made their morning walks alone and in the sort of places in which there was suitable stillness and quiet, where there were temples, sacred groves or something else that delighted the heart. **For they thought that they should not meet with anyone until they had settled down their own soul and put their thoughts in order and that such quiet was suited to the settling of their thoughts. For they had supposed that it was disturbing to be pushed into crowds, immediately after having arisen.** Accordingly then, all the Pythagoreans always selected places most suited to the sacred. After the morning walk they associated with one another most of all in temples but, if not, at least in similar places. They used this time for teaching and learning and for correction of their characters. After such pursuits they turned to the care of their bodies. Most of them had oil-rubs and engaged in foot-races but a few wrestled in the gardens and groves and some did long-jumping or shadow-boxing, being careful to pick out exercises well-suited to the strength of their bodies. For lunch they had bread and honey or a piece of honeycomb, but they did not partake in wine during the day. In the time after lunch they were concerned with the administration of the affairs of the city-state and with affairs relating to foreigners and guest-friends, because of what the law demanded. For they wished to carry out all administrative matters in the hours after lunch. [It is reported] that, when it becomes late afternoon, they set off on walks again, not alone as in the morning walk, but that they walked in twos or threes, reminding themselves of their studies and exercising themselves in noble pursuits. That after the walk they bathed and having bathed they met in common meals. That in these not more than ten men feast together. That, when those dining together have gathered, there are libations and sacrifices of

aromatic spices and frankincense. That then they go to dinner so as to have dined before the setting of the sun. That they had wine, barley cake, bread, relishes, as well as boiled and raw vegetables. That the meat of sacrificial animals was served, but fish only sparingly. For [it is reported that] some of them for certain reasons are not good to eat. After this meal there were libations and a reading. It was customary that the youngest read, and that the eldest be in charge of what should be read and in what manner. When they were about to leave, the wine-pourer poured a libation for them and, when they had made their libations, the eldest gave the following exhortation: do not harm or destroy a cultivated and fruitful plant, and similarly do not harm or destroy an animal that is not by nature harmful to the human race. (100) In addition to these things, maintain reverent and good thoughts regarding the gods, the *daimones* and the race of heroes and have the same attitude concerning your parents and benefactors. Lend aid to the law and fight lawlessness. [It is reported] that, when these things had been said, each one went away to his house. That they used white and clean clothing and similarly also white and clean bedding. That their bedding was cloth made of flax. For [it is reported] that they did not use sheepskins. **That they did not approve of being devoted to hunting nor even of making use of such exercise.**

Such then were the things handed down to the multitude of men regarding their food and manner of living for each day.

Relevance of Sections 96–100 of Iamblichus’ *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* for the *Pythagorean Precepts*

I have argued in section 6 of the Introduction that, while Aristoxenus is the source of these sections, they do not derive from the *Precepts* but rather from a distinct work of Aristoxenus entitled *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. I include the text of these sections with some commentary in this appendix for three reasons: 1) to support and develop the argument I make in the Introduction, 2) to further evaluate treatments of these sections and their relation to the *Pythagorean Precepts* in earlier scholarship and 3) because Aristoxenus, while describing the pattern of the Pythagorean day in these sections, appears to have formulated two precepts (lines 8–12 and 55–6, in bold in the text above) to explain

their behavior, and in doing so adopts some of the style and format of the *Pythagorean Precepts*, so that there is a sense in which these are two additional precepts, even if they are unlikely to come from the work entitled *Pythagorean Precepts*.

Rohde argued that Chapter 21 of *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, which comprises sections 96–100 as presented above, was drawn from the *Precepts* (1871–2 = 1901: 141–3). Dillon and Hershbell agree that this chapter was “possibly borrowed” from Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts* (1991: 121). In neither case, however, is it precisely clear how much and what parts of Chapter 21 these scholars would assign to Aristoxenus. Dillon and Hershbell seem to be relying on Rohde’s analysis. Rohde indicates that he regards several sentences as having been inserted by Iamblichus and argues that Iamblichus did not get the material directly from Aristoxenus but found it already excerpted in Nicomachus. Staab agrees that Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts* may in some sense lie behind this chapter of Iamblichus but argues that there are not enough specific parallels to be able to regard the chapter as a whole coming directly from Aristoxenus or to be able to determine what specific parts reflect Aristoxenus’ text accurately (2002: 327, n. 800). The arguments presented by these scholars do support a connection to Aristoxenus but none of their arguments show that it is the *Pythagorean Precepts* in particular that are the source of VP 96–100.

One fundamental point established by Rohde is that Iamblichus’ source for sections 96–100 must have used plurals referring to Pythagoreans rather than the singular referring to Pythagoras himself. All of Chapter 21, except for the first sentence, describes the pattern of the Pythagorean day in terms of what the Pythagoreans as a group did, with no mention at all of Pythagoras and hence no suggestion at all that these were practices followed when Pythagoras himself was alive. The first sentence (which is clearly composed by Iamblichus, because the first-person verb form is used) introduces what follows as the pursuits that Pythagoras handed over to his followers; the second sentence is especially emphatic that it was under his guidance and following his lead that they did these things. Rohde is surely right that this initial insistence on Pythagoras’ personal role in setting forth this daily pattern fits ill with the total failure to mention him in the rest of the chapter. Indeed, both Diogenes Laertius and Porphyry mention various practices found in Chapter 21 of Iamblichus (e.g., the diet of honey: Diog. Laert. 8.19,

Porph. VP 34), but they assign those practices to Pythagoras himself rather than to the Pythagoreans as a group. If the original source for these reports had presented them with Pythagoras as the subject, it is unintelligible that Iamblichus should have used the plurals, since the singular would fit his focus on Pythagoras himself much better (Boyan   1939: 37–8). It seems overwhelmingly likely, then, in light of Iamblichus’ methods of composition described above, that Rohde is right to explain the oddity in construction of Chapter 21 by supposing that Iamblichus’ primary source(s) for the chapter described the Pythagorean daily pattern using only plurals. Iamblichus then adapts this material to his own account, which is presented in terms of what Pythagoras himself did, by adding the two introductory sentences, which co-opt all the later material as evidence for the time of Pythagoras himself.

Rohde assumes that there was one source for the bulk of the chapter with all its plural verbs and that this was Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts*, although he argues that Iamblichus only knew these through excerpts that he found in Nicomachus’ *Life of Pythagoras* (1871–2 = 1901: 142–3). This assumption is very problematic, because, while Aristoxenus did usually describe Pythagorean behavior in terms of what the Pythagoreans rather than Pythagoras himself said or did, this practice was not limited to the *Pythagorean Precepts*, but was also followed in *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. The crucial points to remember are that in the *Pythagorean Precepts* it is not only the case that Aristoxenus uses plural verbs in almost all cases, as Rohde emphasized, but also that these verbs 1) are all verbs of saying or thinking that introduce indirect statement and 2) all introduce either precepts indicating what should be done or definitions and classifications. In the first sentence after Iamblichus’ two introductory sentences, the subject is in the plural but neither of the other two characteristics of the *Precepts* is found. The sentence does not describe what the Pythagoreans said or thought but rather what they did (“The Pythagoreans made their customary walks . . .”), and there is neither a command nor a definition or classification. The same is true of most of the material in sections 96–100. Simple description of Pythagorean practices, as opposed to precepts stating what should be done, is not paralleled in any of the secure fragments of the *Pythagoreans Precepts* preserved in Stobaeus (frs. 1–7). Thus, the use of plural verbs in sections 96–100 suggests that Aristoxenus was the source, since contrary to many authors in the Pythagorean

tradition he emphasized what the Pythagoreans did, rather than Pythagoras himself. However, for the reasons just given, it is not possible to follow Rohde in regarding most of 96–100 as deriving specifically from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. On the other hand, Staab's skepticism that any passages in the chapter can be securely identified as from any work of Aristoxenus goes too far. Two passages in particular suggest a strong connection to Aristoxenus' presentation of the Pythagoreans.

First, Rohde argued that the practice of eating bread and honey for lunch mentioned in section 97 was a sign of Aristoxenus' authorship of the passage, since Athenaeus reports (2 46e) that Aristoxenus assigned precisely such a meal to the Pythagoreans (1901: 142). Staab points out, however, that the second half of the report in Athenaeus, according to which such a diet exempted them from sickness, is missing in Iamblichus (2002: 327–8) and concludes that Iamblichus is at least not following Aristoxenus closely. On the other hand, Iamblichus is close to Athenaeus' report in three important ways: 1) like Athenaeus and unlike reports in Diogenes Laertius (8.19) and Porphyry (VP 34), where the diet of honey and bread is assigned to Pythagoras himself, Iamblichus talks of Pythagoreans in the plural; 2) like Athenaeus, and again unlike Diogenes Laertius and Porphyry who separate the bread from the honey, Iamblichus indicates that the two were eaten together; and 3) like Athenaeus and also Porphyry this time, but unlike Diogenes, Iamblichus indicates that it was specifically for lunch (ἄριστον) that the Pythagoreans ate bread and honey (Boyancé 1939: 39). Athenaeus specifically cites Aristoxenus as his source, so there is some likelihood that his report is closer to Aristoxenus' original text than Porphyry's or Diogenes', who do not. Iamblichus' agreement with Athenaeus thus suggests that he too is close to Aristoxenus. It appears very likely then that the ultimate source for the report about the Pythagoreans' diet of honey in this section of Iamblichus was Aristoxenus and likely that Iamblichus' text is close to that of Aristoxenus. Iamblichus or his source may have simply dropped the reference to the absence of disease among the Pythagoreans because of their diet, which Athenaeus preserves.

Second, Boyancé has shown that there is still more material besides the reference to the diet of bread and honey that is likely to derive from Aristoxenus. In particular he has shown that the agreement between the teachings regarding the sacrifice and eating of animals in this section of

Iamblichus is too close to what is found elsewhere in the fragments and testimonia of Aristoxenus to be accidental (1939: 39–43). In the passage of Iamblichus, we are told that the Pythagoreans ate the meat of sacrificial animals but that they were also exhorted not to harm or destroy an animal that is not by nature harmful to the human race. Elsewhere, Aristoxenus is reported to have said that Pythagoras ate small piglets and young kids (Aulus Gellius 4.11.6). At first sight, this report has no direct connection to anything in Iamblichus' description of the Pythagorean day. However, the connection becomes clearer in light of Diogenes Laertius' report that Pythagoras offered as sacrifices only cocks, sucking goats and young pigs (8.20) and Porphyry's report that he generally did not offer animate beings to the gods but that cocks and very young pigs were the exception. Aristoxenus' report that Pythagoras only ate young pigs and goats is clearly connected to the reports that he also only sacrificed such animals in Diogenes and Porphyry (although they also mention cocks). So it appears that Aristoxenus is likely to have said that Pythagoras ate young pigs and kids because these were also animals that he sacrificed. Thus when Iamblichus reports that the Pythagoreans ate only sacrificial animals it looks as if this is making the same point that Aristoxenus made in saying that Pythagoras ate young kids and pigs.

One might object that young pigs and kids are clearly the least harmful of animals and eating them is thus in violation of the second point made in Iamblichus that one should not harm or destroy any animal that is not by nature harmful to the human race. Yet, Boyancé brilliantly showed that there is no necessary contradiction and that the passage in Iamblichus is in full accord with Aristoxenus' report that Pythagoras ate kids and piglets (1939: 41–3). In the speech assigned to Pythagoras in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a golden age is envisaged in which no meat was eaten. Pythagoras, however, in agreement with what is said in Iamblichus, goes on to say that it was justified for human beings to kill animals that threatened their lives, although not to eat them (15.108–10). Yet, how do piglets and kids threaten human life? Startlingly, Pythagoras goes on to say that pigs and goats were justifiably chosen as the first animals to sacrifice, because of their crimes (*sua culpa* 15.115 cf. Ovid, *Fasti* 1.349–60). The crime of the pig is to root up the planted seeds and ruin the crops, a crime also mentioned to explain the sacrifice of the pig in the Eleusinian mysteries (Boyancé 1939: 42, n. 2), while the

goat eats the grape vines. So it is precisely the two animals that Aristoxenus identified as ones that Pythagoras ate and sacrificed that turn out to be harmful by nature to the human race, in that they ruin the crops and vines. It appears likely that Ovid is drawing on a tradition in which the Pythagoreans appealed to the crimes of pigs and goats in the golden age to explain their ritual practice of sacrificing and eating just these animals. There is no explicit explanation of why young pigs and goats should be sacrificed and eaten rather than full-grown ones, but presumably the idea was that they should be eaten before they could do harm to the crops. Ovid's account in the *Metamorphoses* agrees with other reports about Pythagorean dietary habits which go back to Aristoxenus, e.g., the emphasis on not killing oxen who work alongside human beings in the fields (15. 120–9, cf. Aristoxenus in Diog. Laert. 8.20), so that it is tempting to think that Aristoxenus' works on the Pythagoreans were an important source for Ovid. The point of immediate importance for sections 96–100 of Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* is that its account of Pythagorean dietary habits matches in prominent ways what we know from other sources Aristoxenus said or is likely to have said about them, notably that only animals that were sacrificed could be eaten and that the animals that were chosen for sacrifice were chosen because of their threat to human life. Boyancé argues less convincingly that the prohibition on drinking wine during the day and the emphasis on taking walks in sanctuaries in Iamblichus are also likely to come from Aristoxenus (1939: 43–7). The cumulative impact of Boyancé's and Rohde's arguments is powerful enough to make it very likely that the material on diet in sections 96–100 has its origin in Aristoxenus, although not in the *Precepts*.

There are, however, two brief passages in 96–100 that do betray the style of the *Precepts*, so that we might wonder if the *Precepts* were not the source after all. The first such passage is found in section 96 and begins with the words “for they thought that it was necessary” (line 8), thus containing both a verb of thinking and a statement of what should be done in the typical fashion of the *Precepts*. The same collocation of “they thought they should not” (ὥοντο δεῖν) appears at the beginning of one of the secure extracts from the *Precepts* in Stobaeus, fragment 4. The next sentence depends grammatically on this collocation and a third sentence introduces a new main verb, but it again is a verb of thinking (“they had supposed” – ὑπειλήφεισαν) introducing indirect statement. This same

introductory verb is also found in the *Precepts* (fr. 2). The stylistic features that are characteristic of the *Precepts* in this passage end at this point, however. Immediately following these three sentences, the subject is in the nominative and explicitly identified as “the Pythagoreans,” something that is never done in the *Precepts*. Moreover, the main verb is again not a verb of saying or thinking, but a verb describing an action.

The second passage that fits the style of the *Precepts* is the penultimate sentence in section 100. The last sentence is a concluding comment by Iamblichus himself, since it makes the point that the practices recounted were handed down to the Pythagoreans (by Pythagoras), which is the point that Iamblichus also makes at the beginning of the chapter. Immediately preceding this final sentence, however, is a single sentence (lines 55–6) that bears a characteristic of the *Precepts*. The crucial feature is its use of a verb of thinking, “they did not approve of engaging in hunting or using such exercise.” The verb used (δοκιμάζειν) is again paralleled in the surviving fragments of the *Precepts* (fr. 1) and the sentence has the form of a precept rather than a simple description.

Iamblichus’ practice as an author, as documented in the Introduction, shows that he is perfectly capable of inserting sentences of the *Pythagorean Precepts* in the midst of material of another origin. Thus, sections 96–100 might be Iamblichus’ combination of material derived from two different works of Aristoxenus. However, since the rest of the material in sections 96–100 shows by its format, as I have argued above and in the Introduction, that it is from a different work of Aristoxenus’, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, it is simpler to consider whether all the material might derive from that source. Indeed, it seems quite likely that, when describing the habitual behavior of the Pythagoreans, Aristoxenus might have in some cases presented the principles that governed the behavior in question. If he did, it would be perfectly natural to formulate these precepts using a style similar to what he used in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Accordingly, the most plausible account is that all of 96–100 derives from *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* but that in lines 8–12 and 55–6 Aristoxenus formulated precepts to explain habitual behavior and in doing so quite naturally adopted the format of his other work *Pythagorean Precepts*. It thus seems appropriate to regard these as two subsidiary precepts.

Brisson and Segonds differ radically from the rest of the scholarship on VP 96–100. They do not refer to Rohde’s argument and do not mention the possibility that Aristoxenus is the source. They imply instead that the source is Antonius Diogenes on the basis of “beaucoup de similarités” with Porphyry VP 32 (1996: 177), whose source Porphyry explicitly identifies as Antonius Diogenes. The supposed similarities are not at all convincing, however. There are two quite general similarities between Porphyry VP 32 and Iamblichus VP 96–100. Both recommend walks in quiet places and establishing a harmony in the soul. In almost every detail, however, the passages differ. In Porphyry the discussion is about what Pythagoras himself did and the verbs are all singular, while in Iamblichus most of the verbs are plurals and the discussion is of what the Pythagoreans as a group did, as Rohde emphasized. In Porphyry it is emphasized that Pythagoras 1) did not seek honors and praise, in an attempt to avoid envy, 2) tuned his soul to the lyre, 3) sang compositions of Thales, Homer and Hesiod, and 4) danced dances that made for health. None of these distinctive points are to be found in this passage of Iamblichus. Porphyry’s source, Antonius Diogenes, probably did, in fact, rely on some familiarity with Aristoxenus for the idea of achieving calm through quiet walks, just as he does later for the mention of a diet of honey (Porphyry VP 34). It is clear, however, that Antonius Diogenes cannot have been Iamblichus’ source in sections 96–100, since there are so few similarities in detail with Porphyry VP 32. Thus those who follow Rohde in arguing that Aristoxenus is the source of sections 96–100 are much more likely to be correct.

Content of Subsidiary Precepts 1 and 2

Before examining these subsidiary precepts in detail it is important to note one feature that they share in contrast to the precepts found in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Precepts in the latter work deal with a wide range of situations but tend to be of a general nature (e.g., anarchy is the greatest evil, friendship should not be abandoned except on grounds of great vice). Both of these subsidiary precepts are much more specific in nature: 1) do not confront crowds immediately upon arising and 2) do not be devoted to hunting. It may be that the *Pythagorean Precepts* were intended as broader guidelines for action and that when Aristoxenus came to describe specific Pythagorean behavior in *On the Pythagorean*

Way of Life, the precepts he formulated in describing this behavior were correspondingly specific.

In the first subsidiary precept, the specific advice against meeting people first thing upon arising is founded on the basic principle that the soul should be kept in a settled state, which allows for coherent thought, and correspondingly that disturbances to the soul should be avoided. Calm is regarded as conducive to settling down one's thoughts, whereas meeting other people, and especially crowds of people, disturbs thought. These principles are then applied to the daily pattern of human life, to yield the precept that one should not meet anyone after getting up in the morning before settling down one's soul and putting one's thoughts in order. In part it is important to do this because dealing with others, particularly groups of others, disturbs the soul, so that we need to be prepared to resist such disturbance by having our soul in the proper state before meeting other people. It also may be implied that during sleep, when reason is not in control, our souls become unsettled by dreams and our thoughts incoherent. Thus, when we wake up the natural state of our soul is turbulent and our thinking incoherent, so that we must put our soul in order before meeting others or we will have no hope of resisting the turmoil that is naturally roused by such encounters. External calm is an aid in settling our souls so that in addition to avoiding meetings with others upon first arising, we should also seek calm surroundings. This emphasis on establishing calm in the soul is in accord with what is said about the soul in the *Precepts* and in particular with fragment 9, where the Pythagoreans describe the mad multiplicity of motions of the soul (lines 110–11). In fragment 9 the Pythagoreans try to control these motions by focusing on proper diet, since each food was thought to affect the soul differently, while here the Pythagoreans are developing a different set of techniques, based not on diet but on environment, to quell these motions of the soul.

Is it possible to conclude anything further about the conception of the soul presupposed in this precept? In the first sentence the soul (*ψυχή*) is treated as something that needs to be settled down (*καθίστημι*). On the other hand, thought (*διάνοια*) is something that needs to be made coherent or put in order (*συναρμόζω*). This might suggest that the soul is seen as the locus of emotions that can become unsettled, whereas thought is conceived of as distinct from the soul and as something that needs to be fitted-together (*συναρμόζω*) properly. Philolaus' conception

of our psychic faculties also separates soul as a seat of sensation and emotion (ψυχή) from intellect (νοῦς), so this precept may reflect an earlier Pythagorean view (see Huffman 2009). This understanding of the soul as the locus of emotions would also fit with the definition of desire as an inclination of the soul in the *Precepts* (fr. 3 and fr. 9, line 73). Indeed, the cautionary description of human beings as having a mad multiplicity of motions of the soul in fragment 9 (lines 110–11) agrees very well with the emphasis here on settling one’s soul down. On the other hand, the next sentence applies the noun κατάστασις (settling) to thought rather than soul, saying that quiet is suited to “settling” thought. Thus the word choice in the previous sentence, which talked of settling the soul, may not have been significant and it may be that no strong distinction between the soul, as something that needed to be settled, and thought, as something that needed to be made coherent, was intended.

At the center of the second subsidiary precept formulated in *VP* 96–100 is the Pythagoreans’ disapproval of hunting both in itself and as a means of exercise. Since the Pythagoreans, as described by Aristoxenus in section 98, only ate sacrificial animals, it would follow that they did not approve of hunting in order to obtain food. On the other hand, the injunction not to harm or injure an animal that is not by nature hostile to man (section 99), would allow for the hunting of animals that were a danger to man. The point may be, then, that one should not “be devoted to” hunting, as opposed to occasionally engaging in it to deal with a dangerous animal. The Greek verb used here does imply that particular concern for hunting is being rejected rather than simple involvement (see below). That hunting could be regarded as exercise in the fourth century can be seen in Xenophon, who reports that in the past the Persians had gone hunting so often “that hunts provided sufficient exercise (γυμνάσιον) both for the Persians themselves and their horses” (*Cyr.* 8.8.12). In *On Hunting* 12, Xenophon further expands on the advantages of hunting which clearly go far beyond gaining meat for the table: “It provides health for the body, improves sight and hearing, causes one to age less and provides education in things relevant to war” (see also *Cyr.* 8.1.34). In the *Laws*, Plato rules out certain sorts of hunting, e.g., hunting that uses snares or nets, because they do not involve enough toil but praises hunting that makes the souls of the young better. This sort of hunting is described as “the hunting of four-footed animals with horses and dogs and the hunter’s own body, when in

their own person they overcome the animal by running and blows and throwing missiles” (*Leg.* 824a–b). Thus, fourth-century thinkers such as Xenophon and Plato saw hunting as physical exercise and training in courage and enduring hardship. The Pythagoreans, however, reject hunting as a regular occupation either for food or for these additional educational benefits. This means, for example, that hunting would not be included among the exercises that the *Precepts* say young men and women are supposed to follow to keep their minds off sex (fr. 9, lines 130–1).

The precept formulated here should be compared to a report found in Porphyry’s *Life of Pythagoras* (7). Porphyry cites as his authority for the report Eudoxus, the famous fourth-century astronomer. Eudoxus wrote a book called *The Tour of the Earth*, which belonged to a genre of writing taking the form of a commentary on the various places visited on a journey around the Mediterranean. Porphyry cites a passage from the seventh book of this work, where evidently Eudoxus talked about Pythagoras’ home island of Samos, which provided the occasion for anecdotes or even a short life of Pythagoras (Lasserre 1966: 264–5). Eudoxus may have had particular interest in Pythagoras, because he had studied geometry with the Pythagorean Archytas of Tarentum (*Diog. Laert.* 8. 86). Porphyry rather surprisingly reports that Pythagoras’ teachings “are known by nearly everyone because they have been written down in the treatises (a reference to the pseudo-Pythagorean treatises?) but the rest of his practices are less well known” (*VP* 7). As an exception he then cites the report from Eudoxus: “Except that Eudoxus says in the seventh book of his *Tour of the Earth* that he practiced such great purity in avoiding slaughter and slaughterers that he not only kept away from animal food but never came near either cooks or hunters” (fr. 325 Lasserre 1966). This report is usually taken as suggesting that Pythagoras completely abstained from animal food even to the extent of avoiding those who cooked it and hunted for it and thus as contradicting the statements of Aristoxenus that Pythagoras ate some sorts of meat, e.g., the meat of sacrificial animals. There is, however, no necessary contradiction. Eudoxus’ report embodies one of the short maxims known as *acusmata* which were given by Pythagoras to his followers, namely “keep away from animal food” (cited as an *acusma* in *Iambl. Protr.* 21). Such an order, however, need not be absolute. It may simply mean that generally speaking one should avoid animal food but

still allow for some exceptions, such as the eating of certain sacrificial animals.

The attitude towards cooks and hunters is also consistent with what is said in VP 96–100. In general, cooks and hunters do not make the fine distinctions made by the Pythagoreans and thus cook and hunt all animals indiscriminately. Accordingly they do kill and cook animals that they should not and are thus polluted and according to Pythagoras' high standards of purity should be avoided. This is perfectly consistent with the assertion that one should not be devoted to hunting nor even use it as exercise. As suggested above this precept does not necessarily rule out hunting in all cases; it might still be allowed, if the animal is a danger to humans. It does rule out being a devotee of hunting, however, or of using it for exercise, i.e. of going on hunts but not actually killing an animal oneself. One of the reasons for this prohibition might be what is stated in Eudoxus' report, i.e. that even associating with hunters is polluting, since they do not make the proper distinctions as to what animals can be killed.

Detailed Commentary

Line 9 – τὴν ἰδίαν ψυχὴν καταστήσουσι: The verb καθίστημι with ψυχὴν as an object indicates that some sort of disturbance of soul, probably in the literal sense of physical agitation, is settled down. The settling down pictured here is contrasted with the disturbance (θορυβῶδες) produced in our soul by crowds four lines later. The tumult and confusion indicated by θορυβῶδες in fact seems closely tied to the uproar of a crowd of people (LSJ s.v.). A passage in Aristotle's *Physics* provides an interesting parallel for this use of καθίστημι with ψυχή as an object (247b17–18). Aristotle says that the soul's natural state is one of turbulence and that it is by the soul's settling down or coming to a state of stillness (τῷ . . . καθίστασθαι τὴν ψυχὴν) that understanding or knowing results. Aristotle goes on particularly to associate turbulence of soul with the young and it may well be that Plato's comments at *Timaeus* 43a–44d about the flow of nutriment creating turmoil in the souls of the young and disrupting the movements of the same and the different were in the back of Aristotle's mind. Nothing in this passage of Aristoxenus suggests any connection to the *Timaeus*, however. The Aristotelian passage is interesting both in showing that this usage of καθίστημι has a good parallel in the generation before Aristoxenus was writing, and that the Pythagoreans to some extent shared with Plato and Aristotle the association of proper intellectual functioning with a settled soul.

Lines 9–10 – συναρμόζονται τὴν διάνοιαν: I have not found any good parallels for the use of συναρμόζω with διάνοια. The combination is not very surprising in the Pythagorean tradition where ἀρμονία plays such a prominent role (e.g., Philolaus frs. 1 and 6; συναρμόζω appears in fr. 2). The middle has the sense of joining together or uniting and the verb often implies that what is put together forms a whole (LSJ s.v.). Thus, the primary idea seems to be that of establishing coherence in thought so that it all fits together properly rather than being just a hodge-podge of separate thoughts. The verb is used in musical contexts of one instrument being tuned to another (e.g., a lyre to an *aulos* at Xen. *Symp.* 3.1), but it is not clear that any musical analogy is explicitly intended here.

Line 11 – ἀναστάντας: ἀνίστημι used intransitively, as it is here, can refer to “getting up” of all sorts, including standing up to speak at a meeting (LSJ s.v.). Of course the broader context in Iamblichus refers specifically to the morning. It appears, moreover, that even in neutral contexts, the verb implies getting up from sleep, much as the expression “to get up” in English does. If I say in English that I always have a headache upon getting up, I might be talking simply about standing up, but the first assumption of an English speaker would be that I am referring to getting up from sleep in the morning. In Greek, the verb is sometimes combined with a word for bed, when it means this, but it is also used by itself, as in the description of Cleobis and Biton going to sleep in the temple and not getting up (οὐκ ἐτι ἀνέστησαν – Hdt. 1.31).

Line 56 – καταγίνεσθαι: This verb with the preposition περί indicates that someone shows particular concern for or devotion to (περί) a given topic or pursuit. Most of the contexts in which it appears suggest that the verb means more than simply being concerned with something and implies a real devotion to the subject or pursuit. The earliest uses of this verb attested by LSJ belong to a passage of testimony in a speech of Demosthenes (21.22) and some third-century authors, and have the meaning “abide” or “dwell.” From this literal meaning a figurative meaning of “dwelling on” a subject matter or pursuit and thus being devoted to it apparently developed. Uses in this sense of “be devoted to” are not found until Polybius and Philodemus. Polybius (31.29.6) describes the passion that Scipio, while in Macedonia, developed, interestingly given the subject of subsidiary fragment 2, for hunting. The context makes clear that the translation “be concerned with” is too weak: Scipio is described as “becoming very enthusiastic.” Thus, when Polybius says that ἐν τούτῳ κατεγίνετο for all the time the army remained in Macedonia after the battle, he means not that Scipio was merely concerned with hunting during this time but that he was devoted to it. Similarly, Epictetus (3.2.6), who uses the same construction with περί as is found in Aristoxenus, talks about the philosophers of his day who pass by two fields of study and καταγίνονται περί τὸν τρίτον. To translate this as “are concerned with

the third” is again clearly too weak. Epictetus’ point is that they neglect the first two fields to “concentrate on” or “devote themselves to” the third. Diogenes Laertius also uses the construction with περί saying that those “devoted to” (ὅσοι περί . . . κατὰγίνονται) extreme subtlety in use of words are called dialecticians (1.17.10).

Aristoxenus’ use of the verb with the meaning “be devoted to” is the only one attested before Polybius in the second century, so we might wonder if Iamblichus has intervened in the text here. The usage pattern in Iamblichus suggests, however, that it is as likely to belong to Aristoxenus as Iamblichus. The verb, in fact, appears in only two passages in the *VP*, here and shortly before in section 97, in material that is also likely to come from Aristoxenus. The verb is used by Iamblichus only five times elsewhere in his works (*in Nic.* 8.27, 9.2, 106.19; *Protr.* 119.26; *Comm. Math.* 7.58), so its appearance twice in sections 96–100 and nowhere else in the *VP* would appear more likely to be explained by its use by his source in those sections, which other evidence shows to be Aristoxenus, than as Iamblichus himself intruding into the text.

Line 56 – γυμνασίῳ: LSJ indicates that γυμνάσιον in the plural refers to bodily exercises, but it is also used of bodily exercise in the singular. See, e.g., Xenophon *Oec.* 10. 11.1 where mixing flour and kneading dough is praised as good exercise (ἀγαθὸν . . . γυμνάσιον). See also Xenophon *Eq.* 7.18.1. It appears in the plural in fragment 9, line 130 of the *Precepts*. The point is that the Pythagoreans did not approve of hunting either as a central concern or as an exercise.

Appendix 2

Subsidiary Precept 3: Memory

Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* 163–4

τῶν δ' ἐπιστημῶν οὐχ ἥκιστα φασὶ τοὺς Πυθαγορείους τιμᾶν 1
μουσικὴν τε καὶ ἰατρικὴν καὶ μαντικὴν. . . (164) . . . ἐχρῶντο δὲ 2
καὶ Ὅμηρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου λέξεσι διειλεγμέναις πρὸς 3
ἐπανόρθωσιν ψυχῆς. 4
5
ῥῶντο δὲ δεῖν κατέχειν καὶ διασώζειν ἐν τῇ μνήμῃ πάντα τὰ 6
διδασκόμενά τε καὶ φραζόμενα, καὶ μέχρι τούτου συσκευάζεσθαι 7
τάς τε μαθήσεις καὶ τὰς ἀκροάσεις, μέχρι οὗτου δύναται 8
παραδέχεσθαι τὸ μανθάνον καὶ διαμνημονεῦον, ὅτι ἐκεῖνό 9
ἐστὶν ᾧ δεῖ γινώσκειν καὶ ἐν ᾧ γνώμην φυλάσσειν. 10
11
ἐτίμων γοῦν σφόδρα τὴν μνήμην καὶ πολλὴν αὐτῆς ἐποιοῦντο 12
γυμνασίαν τε καὶ ἐπιμέλειαν, ἔν τε τῷ μανθάνειν οὐ πρότερον 13
ἀφιέντες τὸ διδασκόμενον, ἕως περιλάβοιεν βεβαίως τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς 14
πρώτης μαθήσεως, καὶ καθ' ἡμέραν λεγομένων ἀνάμνησιν 15
(ποιούμενοι) τόνδε τὸν τρόπον. Πυθαγόρειος ἀνὴρ οὐ 16
πρότερον ἐκ τῆς κοίτης ἀνίστατο ἢ τὰ χθές γενόμενα 17
πρότερον ἀναμνησθεῖν. 18

10 ᾧ¹] Küster ὁ F ἐν ᾧ] Kiessling ἐν τῷ F

14 ἀφιέντες] Rittershusius ἐφιέντες F 16 (ποιούμενοι)] Rohde

Translation

They say that among the sciences the Pythagoreans particularly honored music, medicine and divination . . . They also employed select verses of Homer and Hesiod for the correction of the soul.

They thought that it was necessary to hold fast and preserve in the memory everything that was taught and advised and to use contrivance in teaching and lectures up to the point where that (part of us) which learns and preserves in memory is able to receive them, for it is that

(part) by which it is necessary to understand a maxim and in which it is necessary to preserve it.

At any rate they especially honored memory and gave it great exercise and attention. When learning they did not let go of what was being taught until they should have a firm hold on the rudiments. Every day they recollected what was said in the following manner: A Pythagorean did not get up from his bed until all that had happened the previous day had been recalled.

Relevance of the Text to the *Pythagorean Precepts*

This text (subsidiary precept 3 = S3) has not generally been recognized as a part of the *Pythagorean Precepts*. It is not included in Wehrli's collection of the fragments of Aristoxenus nor by Burkert in his list of passages in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* that are likely to derive from the *Precepts* (1972: 101). DK, followed by Timpanaro Cardini, treats Iamblichus VP 163–6, including S3, as deriving from Aristoxenus (58D1 = Timpanaro Cardini 1b) but does not indicate the work of Aristoxenus from which the editors think it derives. Rohde also seems to regard much of 163–6 as deriving from Aristoxenus (1871–2 = 1901: 156–7) but does not make clear which specific passages, if any, he regards as deriving from the *Precepts*. Mewaldt regards most of 163–4 as deriving from Aristoxenus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* (1904: 29). In Chapter 6 of the Introduction I have shown that the arguments of DK, Rohde and Mewaldt for regarding the whole of 163–6 as Aristoxenian are inadequate. Mewaldt did, however, also argue that S3 was indeed from the *Precepts* (1904: 32).

The arguments for regarding this sentence as deriving from the *Precepts* are not as strong as for fragments 1–11. It is not specifically identified as coming from the *Precepts* as is the case with the fragments deriving from Stobaeus (frs. 1–7) and one fragment in Iamblichus (fr. 11 where Aristoxenus' distinctive word for precept, ἀπόφασις, is used). Nor does it appear in the immediate context of material that parallels what is found in Stobaeus, as is the case with other fragments deriving from Iamblichus (frs. 8–10). Nonetheless, it shows the general stylistic features of the *Precepts* in that 1) it uses the plurals that are characteristic of Aristoxenus' account as opposed to the singulars favored by Iamblichus,

2) it uses a verb of saying or thinking to introduce the precept, 3) it presents what the Pythagoreans thought we should do rather than describing their actions or giving specific examples. Most importantly, it uses one of the signature phrases of the *Precepts*, *φοντο δὲ δεῖν*, variations upon which appear five times in other fragments (see the detailed commentary for parallels). Finally, the fragment appears to focus not just on memory in general but specifically on the teaching, learning and memorizing of precepts (see the detailed commentary on *φραζόμενα* and *γνώμην* below), which would make particular sense if it derived from Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts*. Given this evidence, two possibilities appear most likely. First, it may indeed be a quotation from the *Precepts*. Second, in light of Iamblichus, *VP* 96–100, where Aristoxenus appears to have formulated precepts in the style of the *Pythagorean Precepts* in another of his works, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, it may be that this sentence in *VP* 164 originated in the latter work as well. Since an explicit connection to the *Precepts*, such as is found in the case of fragments 1–11, is lacking, it seems best to treat this sentence as likely to derive from Aristoxenus, but leave undetermined whether it derives from the *Precepts* or *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. However, because of its similarity to fragments surely deriving from the *Precepts* and the possibility that it has that origin too, I include it here in an appendix as a subsidiary precept.

Should any of the material immediately preceding or following S3 be regarded as having the same origin as it does? What immediately precedes is not closely connected to it in either content or style. The preceding paragraph focuses on the topics of music, medicine and divination and has nothing to say about memory. It does describe the Pythagoreans in the plural as we would expect from Aristoxenus but it does not fit the format of the *Precepts* in that it describes the actions of the Pythagoreans rather than the precepts they put forth. Thus the lack of connection between S3 and what precedes clearly suggests that the preceding material came from a different source. As mentioned above, some scholars have thought that this preceding paragraph comes from a different work of Aristoxenus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, but as I have argued in the Introduction ([Chapter 6](#)), the similarities cited to support this conclusion are simply too general to be convincing.

What follows S3 does continue to discuss the same subject matter, memory, and this might suggest that it has the same origin. However, the

style is emphatically different from the *Precepts* in that it describes Pythagorean actions rather than setting forth precepts or analyzing concepts. The singular is also used in one place (“a Pythagorean man”) rather than Aristoxenus’ typical plurals. Even more importantly, as Rohde noted (1871–2 = 1901: 157), the sentence immediately following S3 makes essentially the same point (“at any rate they especially honored memory”) as S3 (“They thought that it was necessary to hold fast and preserve in the memory everything”) before going on to develop the point in a different way. This repetition suggests that Iamblichus is here turning to a new source to support the same point rather than that the passage is a continuous passage from one source. It thus seems most likely that S3 alone derives from Aristoxenus and that Iamblichus crafted the surrounding material from other sources.

Content of Subsidiary Precept 3 and Memory in the Pythagorean Tradition

In order to appreciate the treatment of memory here in S3 it is necessary to examine it against the broader role of memory in the Pythagorean tradition. There are five main contexts in which memory plays a role in Pythagoreanism.

(1) Concerning Pythagoras himself, memory is particularly invoked with regard to reincarnation. Heraclides Ponticus (fourth century BC) lists Pythagoras’ previous incarnations and says that his earliest incarnation was as Aethalides, the son of Hermes. Hermes granted his son any wish except immortality and Aethalides chose the gift of remembering everything that happened to him both during life and in death. He preserves this ability to remember what happened to him during life through his subsequent rebirths as Euphorbus, Hermotimus, Pyrrhus and finally Pythagoras (Diog. Laert. 8.4–5; cf. Porph. *VP* 45.8, Diodorus 10.6.1, Burkert 1972: 138–41). It is unclear how far back this tradition goes, but some have thought that Empedocles alludes to Pythagoras’ ability to remember his past lives in fragment 129 (DK) when he describes a man who “easily saw each of the things in ten and twenty human lifetimes.” Elsewhere in the tradition it is reported that Pythagoras was able to remind other people of their past lives (Porph. *VP* 26.2; Iambl. *VP* 63 and 143).

(2) In a list of general precepts which do not seem to primarily derive from Aristoxenus, Diogenes Laertius (8.22, see the Introduction, [Chapter 7](#), for more on this passage) reports that Pythagoras urged his followers to “train (ἀσκεῖν) the memory.”

(3) Pythagoras is reported to have examined potential pupils for their readiness in learning and their memory (Iambl. *VP* 94).

(4) Perhaps the most famous presentation of the Pythagorean use of memory, after point 1 above, is the variety of reports of the Pythagorean practice of reviewing in detail everything that happened and was said during the day. The source of the tradition is impossible to determine (Burkert 1972: 213) but the earliest version, that of Diodorus (10.5.1), has the Pythagoreans do this review of the previous day before arising the next morning. A passage in Iamblichus (*VP* 166) emphasizes that the things must be remembered in order and that if there is time the events of the day before that should be remembered in the same way. Iamblichus seems to be using the same source as Diodorus because both report, using exactly the same terms, that they trained the memory in order to gain “knowledge, experience and practical wisdom” (ἐπιστήμην καὶ ἐμπειρίαν καὶ φρόνησιν). In still other versions, the review is to be done before going to sleep and the goal is not just memory training but an examination of conduct (Iambl. *VP* 256; cf. Cic. *Sen.* 38). According to Porphyry (*VP* 40) we are to review the events of the day at night, correcting ourselves for misdeeds, but also in the morning look forward to the day ahead. Before sleeping we are to recite the verse which asks “Where have I transgressed, what have I accomplished, what have I not done that I should have?” (This verse also appears as line 42 in the compilation of verses ascribed to Pythagoras in the later tradition and known as the *Golden Verses*.) Similar practices were adopted by other philosophers, perhaps under Pythagorean influence (e.g., Sextius, see Seneca *De Ira* 3.36.1).

(5) Finally, memory is associated with secrecy. Diodorus (10.8.3) reports that their precepts regarding friendship were not discovered by outsiders because they were not put in writing but preserved in memory. Iamblichus says that all of their most essential beliefs were kept hidden, unwritten and in their memories (*VP* 226).

If we turn now to the presentation of memory in S3, it is striking that there are few connections to this broader Pythagorean tradition on memory beyond the obvious connection with point 2 above that calls for some sort of training of memory. Neither in this subsidiary precept nor in the *Precepts* is there any mention of reincarnation or of secrecy, as in points 1 and 5 above. Similarly the *Precepts* do not envisage a testing of potential students, as in point 3. Nor does S3 call for a review of everything that happens within each day, as in point 4.

Subsidiary precept 3 instead focuses more narrowly on teaching and learning and in particular on the teaching and learning of moral advice and maxims such as is found in the *Precepts*. The first part of the fragment concerns learners and calls on them to hold fast (i.e. “fix,” κατέχειν) and preserve in the memory what is taught and advised. These are presumably two related steps. We must first “get down” what we are taught and then preserve it in our memory over time. It is hard to be sure of the scope of this precept. Does it apply to everything that is taught or is it limited to the moral instruction such as is found in the *Precepts*? The combination διδασκόμενά τε καὶ φραζόμενα perhaps suggests that precepts are meant. Certainly φραζόμενα is unlikely to mean simply “said.” The context is clearly teaching (as indicated not only by διδασκόμενα but also μαθήσεις καὶ . . . ἀκροάσεις), so it seems very unlikely that these Pythagoreans are urging people to memorize everything said during the day (something that may be intended in point 4 above). Indeed, φράζω is more likely to have its original meaning of “point out” or “call attention to” (see the detailed commentary). It is possible for any sort of teacher to “call attention to something” but the phrase fits moral advice best and this suspicion is confirmed by the use of γνώμην in the second part of the sentence, a word that is used for moral maxims by Aristotle (see the detailed commentary). Thus, while it is possible that the Pythagoreans are calling for memorization of everything taught in all subjects (e.g., mathematics), the language of the precept indicates that the primary suggestion is that students should memorize precepts such as are found in the *Pythagorean Precepts*. This same point then applies to the second part of the sentence so that the teachings and lectures mentioned are likely to be those dealing with precepts.

The second part of the sentence turns from students to teachers and prescribes that learning and lectures ought to be so contrived that the

student is able to learn them and preserve them in memory. The point seems to be that simple presentation of rules with no attention to whether the student can grasp them and memorize them is inadequate. Instead of referring to the student directly, the precept refers to “that which learns and preserves in memory.” This is most naturally taken as referring to “that (part of us) which learns and preserves in memory,” i.e. the intellect. Teaching and lectures must be suited to this part, because it is the part that understands moral rules and it is in this part that moral rules are preserved. It is important to note that the Pythagoreans connect memorization closely to learning and understanding (τὸ μανθάνον . . . ἐκεῖνο . . . ᾧ δεῖ γινώσκειν). They appear to think that memorization is not possible or at least not as successful, if the students do not understand what they are memorizing. This position appears to differ from Aristotle, who is at pains to say that memory is not connected to thought but rather to the part of the soul that deals with perception. In part Aristotle’s view is a result of his belief that some animals have memory but not intelligence (*De memoria* 449b30–450a25; Sorabji 2006: 71).

Subsidiary precept 3 emphasizes that learning and lectures must be able to be received by that part of us which learns and remembers, because it is that part by which we understand and in which we preserve moral maxims. At first sight this seems obvious and it is hard to see to what other part teaching should be directed. It is hard to understand the point here, since we simply do not know what sort of psychology the author is assuming. Fragments of the *Precepts* deal in some detail with topics such as desire and pleasure but do not identify any specific parts of the soul. Perhaps the point of the last part of S3 is that precepts are not supposed to be directed to the desires or emotions, but should rather be designed to be grasped by and preserved in the intellect.

If the precepts are supposed to be constructed in this way, we might reasonably ask whether there are any signs that Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts* have been put together in such a way as to aid the intellect in understanding and memorizing them. However, it is important to remember that the *Pythagorean Precepts* are a treatise by Aristoxenus and not directly composed by the Pythagoreans, whose beliefs he is reporting. Thus, it need not be the case that Aristoxenus is presenting the precepts in exactly the form in which the Pythagoreans

themselves presented them. Indeed, it may well be that the precepts were only presented in oral form and that their presentation differed from teacher to teacher. His main concern may have been to capture the content of the precepts rather than also trying to preserve their form. With this caveat in mind it still seems not unlikely that the *Pythagorean Precepts* reflect to some extent the principles used by Pythagoreans such as Xenophilus in presenting them to students. It is interesting to compare the *Precepts* with the earlier *acusmata* in this regard. The *acusmata* have the advantage over the *Precepts* for memorization in that they are mostly short maxims with no explanation (one must put on the right shoe first [Iambl. VP 83]) or a minimum of explanation (do not pick up food that falls from the table, for it belongs to the Heroes [Diog. Laert. 8.34]). On the other hand the *Precepts* offer careful definitions (e.g., of desire in fragment 3), classifications (e.g., of types of luck in fragment 7) and explanations (e.g., of why we should believe in the gods, fragment 8) that make more of an appeal to the intellect. Because they are longer and more complex than the *acusmata*, they are in a sense harder to grasp and memorize but because they are part of a well-articulated structure of concepts, they make more of an appeal to the student's intellect and once grasped may be easier to retain because of that coherent structure.

If it is granted that S3 is primarily concerned with memorization of precepts, it is still reasonable to ask if the Pythagoreans reported by Aristoxenus adopted some sort of training to develop the memory such as is described in point 4 above. It may be that they did, but it does not seem likely that the specific training described in point 4, which calls for reviewing the day in the evening before bed or in the morning before rising, was put forth in the *Precepts*. There is good reason to think that sections 96–100 of Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* derive from Aristoxenus' work of the same title (see further in the Introduction and [Appendix 1](#)). In sections 96–100 Aristoxenus gives an account of what the Pythagoreans with whom he was familiar did in the course of a day from morning until night. He says nothing about a detailed review of the previous day, although we surely would have expected to hear about such a review if it formed part of these Pythagoreans' daily routine. On the other hand, in Aristoxenus' account of the Pythagorean day the Pythagoreans are said to engage in lessons (διδασκαλίας καὶ μαθήσεις) in the morning (VP 96) and then to remind themselves of these lessons (ἀναμνησκομένους τὰ μαθήματα) in the late afternoon (VP 97). This

memory practice is appropriate to what is found in S3 precisely because it deals specifically with lessons. So one technique followed by Aristoxenus' Pythagoreans appears to have been conscious recall in the late afternoon of lessons learned in the morning.

What connections can be seen between the treatment of memory in S3 and other discussions of memory in the fifth and fourth centuries? Although both Plato and Aristotle would certainly agree with the Pythagoreans in general terms that memory is a good thing, none of the characteristic features of the Platonic and Aristotelian accounts are found in S3 (e.g., the theory of recollection or the faculty of imagination). The Pythagorean treatment of memory has perhaps most in common with what is found in the sophists, but here again there is too little similarity in specifics to suggest any real connection. The sophist Hippias claimed that he could remember fifty names after having heard them only once (Pl. *Hp. mai.* 285e; see also Pl. *Hp. mi.* 368e and Xen. *Symp.* 1.4.62). The last chapter of the *Two-fold Arguments* asserts that “memory is the greatest and finest discovery for our life and useful for all things, both for philosophy and for wisdom” (9.1). The treatise goes on (9.3–6) to give simple instructions on how to memorize. The first of which, repetition, is somewhat similar to what Aristoxenus reports in his account of the Pythagorean day, i.e. recall in the afternoon of lessons learned in the morning. The second, which finds no parallel in Aristoxenus, calls on us to connect what we want to remember with things we already know, so that we should remember the name Chrysippus by connecting it with *chrysos* (gold) and *hippos* (horse). So the treatment of memory in S3 fits into the general emphasis on its value in the fifth and fourth centuries without showing significant connection in specifics to any of the other accounts. What is most distinctive about the treatment of memory in S3 is its focus on memorization of moral precepts and its emphasis on presenting teaching and lectures in a way that facilitates learning and memorization.

Detailed Commentary

Line 6 – **ᾠοντο δὲ δεῖν**: A common expression in the *Precepts*. See fragment 2, fragment 8, fragment 9, fragment 11, fragment 13.

Lines 6–7 – **πάντα τὰ διδασκόμενά τε καὶ φραζόμενα**: It is not likely that φραζόμενα means “things said” (as translated by Dillon and Hershbell 1991: 179,

and Clark 1989: 74), since there is no reason to think that the Pythagoreans thought that one should remember every word spoken in whatever context. The relevant context is provided by τὰ διδασκόμενα: it is what they are taught that Pythagoreans are supposed to remember. Indeed, φράζω originally meant “to point out” or “to show” rather than simply “say” (LSJ). As Mourelatos suggests (2008: 20) the core meaning is something like “to call attention to” and implies authority on the part of the speaker. Thus, it seems best to understand τὰ φραζόμενα as “the things pointed out” or “advised” by the moral teacher. Accordingly, it is precisely precepts such as those found in the *Pythagorean Precepts* that the Pythagoreans here direct the students to memorize.

Lines 7–8 – μέχρι τούτου . . . μέχρι ὅτου: This precise combination is found nowhere else. However, μέχρι τούτου is common in the fourth century, appearing seven times in Plato and twenty-two in Aristotle. It can be used absolutely but also with a correlative phrase as here. It is most commonly followed by ἕως (“until” – e.g., Arist. *De an.* 416b14), but it is also often followed by a repeated μέχρι with the genitive case of the relative pronoun (μέχρι οὗ, e.g., Pl. *Resp.* 471b3). The construction with ὅτου here in Aristoxenus is simply a slight variation on this latter usage.

Line 7 – συσκευάζεσθαι: This verb appears only here in Iamblichus. It appears only once in Plato and never in Aristotle or elsewhere in Aristoxenus. Nonetheless, it is not an uncommon verb in the fifth and fourth centuries BC, appearing some eighty times, so there is no reason to suppose that Aristoxenus could not have used it. It appears first in Thucydides and is particularly common in Xenophon, who uses it over fifty times. The literal meaning is “to make ready by putting together” and hence it is used frequently in military narrative, in the middle voice, to describe soldiers “packing up” their equipment (Xen. *Ana.* 2.1.2.3). From this very specific meaning it comes to mean “prepare” in general, even in Xenophon. Thus, when a figure in a dream tells an aged Cyrus to “pack up” (συσκευάζου) because he will soon depart to the gods (*Cyr.* 8.7.2), Cyrus does not literally pack anything but rather makes the proper religious preparations for his death.

In a number of other cases, both the active and middle can mean “to prepare” with a negative connotation similar to the English “contrive” (see LSJ) or “concoct.” Thus someone is described as “concocting” a poison (Ctesias cited in Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 18) or a fraud (Dem. *Against Zenothemis* 4.4). Xenophon uses it once metaphorically (*Cyr.* 5.1.16.2) of love ensnaring someone (i.e., “packing him up” in a sense similar to the English “wrapped up” or “tied up”: “She has got him all wrapped up”). In later Greek, in the life of Cato the Elder (11.3), Plutarch comments that when most men gain honor and power they then “contrive” or “arrange” their lives (συσκευασάμενοι τὸν βίον) for pleasure and

leisure. At first sight it does not seem necessary for there to be a negative connotation here in Aristoxenus. The verb can simply refer to “preparing” teaching or lectures. However, closer examination suggests that there may be a hint of a negative overtone to the verb, since otherwise it is hard to see why there needs to be a limit (μέχρι τούτου – “just up to the point”) assigned to its activity. The suggestion seems to be that straightforward teaching and lectures would be best but that more “contrived” instruction is required in order to make the subject easier for the student to learn and remember. This may go along with the idea expressed in fragment 6 that all learning needs to be willing. What we want students to learn must be contrived in such a way that they learn it willingly and can retain it easily.

There has been some confusion as to what subject should be supplied with συσκευάζεσθαι. Both Dillon and Hershbell (1991: 179) and Clark (1989: 74) seem to assume that, since students (or the student) were the understood subjects of the infinitives in the first part of the sentence, they are also the subjects here. The problem with this is that students are not the ones who prepare teachings and lectures. Since the verb can be used without any expressed object with the meaning of “pack up” or “prepare” (oneself), Dillon and Hershbell evidently understand it in this way translating it “prepare themselves” and then take the accusatives τὰς τε μαθήσεις καὶ τὰς ἀκροάσεις as some sort of accusatives of respect. Accordingly they envisage the students “preparing themselves in their lessons and lectures.” I cannot find a parallel for this construction with συσκευάζεσθαι. The accusatives with this verb invariably denote what is being packed up or prepared. Clark avoids the problem by translating συσκευάζεσθαι as “acquire” which allows the student to be the subject but there is no parallel for this meaning of the verb. In the face of these difficulties, it seems much more likely that we are to understand “teachers” as the subject of συσκευάζεσθαι, since it is teachers who prepare or contrive teachings and lectures. There is really no difficulty with the shift of subject from the first to the second part of the sentence. The precept as a whole is dealing with teaching. In the first clause we naturally supply “students” as the subject since the reference is to remembering things that have been taught or advised and it is students who are taught. In the second part of the sentence it is just as natural to understand teachers as the subject (although the subject need not be literally expressed, just as in the Greek), since the reference is to composing teachings and lectures.

Line 8 – τὰς τε μαθήσεις καὶ τὰς ἀκροάσεις: The latter word is used by Aristoxenus in his famous report of Plato’s “lecture” on the good (*Harm.* 39.10) and it also has the sense of “lecture” in Aristotle (*Metaph.* 994b32). Heraclitus (fr. 55) is one of the first to use μάθησις and it is common in Plato

and Aristotle. Aristoxenus uses it in fragment 6, where it means “learning.” The word refers to the process of acquiring knowledge and can mean either learning (from the student’s perspective) or instruction (from the teacher’s perspective), as it does here. For the meaning “teaching” or “instruction” see Pl. *Ap.* 26a.

Line 9 – τὸ μανθάνον καὶ διαμνημονεύον: This (i.e. “that which learns and preserves in memory”) is the subject of δύνανται. Aristotle uses τὸ μανθάνον in a similar way in *On Generation and Corruption* 319a9 (“that which learns [τὸ μανθάνον] is said to come to be learned and not to come-to-be without qualification”), where it is not clear whether Aristotle just means “the person who learns” or whether he is thinking of a part of us that learns. At *Physics* 255b1 τὸ μανθάνον seems to be equivalent to ὁ μανθάνων used a few lines earlier, in both cases meaning “the learner.” In Aristoxenus it seems we must understand the expression to refer to a part of us since in the latter part of the sentence it is described as the means by which we gain knowledge and the place where knowledge is preserved.

Line 9 – ἐκεῖνο: This refers back to τὸ μανθάνον καὶ διαμνημονεύον and thus is not equivalent just to memory as suggested by the translation of Dillon and Hershbell (1991: 179). The Pythagoreans are clearly thinking of a larger intellectual faculty that does indeed remember (διαμνημονεύον) but that also is responsible for learning (μανθάνον). This same dual function of the faculty is then expressed again at the end of the sentence where it is said to be that by which it is necessary to gain knowledge as well as that in which it is preserved. It is only the second of these functions that can be identified with memory.

Line 10 – γνώμην: It is probably the case that this is the object of both γινώσκειν and φυλάσσειν. The word does not usually mean “knowledge” but rather either the organ by which one perceives or knows, i.e. thought or judgment, or the result of the activity of this organ, i.e. a judgment or an opinion. Since ἐκεῖνο, the subject of the sentence, refers to the organ, γνώμην must here mean the judgment or opinion that it produces. There are some instances where it does mean not just a judgment or an opinion but knowledge, the clearest of which is Plato *Republic* 476d5. Here a contrast is established between the one who “knows knowledge” (γινώσκοντος γνώμην) and the one who “opines opinion” (δόξαν . . . δοξάζοντος). Here in S3, however, we should understand γνώμην as a judgment in the sense of a precept or maxim. So the learning in question is precisely the learning of the precepts that the Pythagoreans are setting forth. This meaning is most clearly visible in Aristotle’s discussion of the use of

maxims in the *Rhetoric*, where γνώμη is the term for maxim throughout (1394a19–1395b19). This usage is not limited to Aristotle, however, and can be found in Xenophon (*Mem.* 4.2.9) and even Sophocles (*Aj.* 1091). When γιγνώσκειν takes γνώμην = maxim as an object, it presumably means something like “perceive” or “recognize” the maxim, in the sense of understanding it.

Appendix 3

Subsidiary Precept 4: All Sex is Harmful

Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* 10.9.2–4 (frs. 16–18
Cohen-Skalli)

(2) Ὅτι Πυθαγόρας παρήγγελλε τοῖς μαθηταῖσι σπανίως μὲν 1
ὁμνύναι, χρησαμένους δὲ τοῖς ὅρκοις πάντως ἐμμένειν. (3) Ὅτι ὁ 2
αὐτὸς Πυθαγόρας καὶ περὶ τῶν ἀφροδισίων ἐκλογιζόμενος τὸ 3
συμφέρον παρήγγελλε κατὰ μὲν τὸ θέρος μὴ πλησιάζειν γυναῖδι, 4
κατὰ δὲ τὸν χειμῶνα προσιέναι τεταμειμένως. 5
6
καθόλου γὰρ τὸ γένος τῶν ἀφροδισίων ὑπελάμβανον εἶναι 7
βλαβερόν, τὴν <δὲ> συνέχειαν αὐτῶν τελέως ἀσθενείας καὶ 8
ὀλέθρου ποιητικὴν ἐνόμιζον. 9
10
(4) Ὅτι Πυθαγόραν φασὶν ὑπὸ τίνος ἐρωτηθέντα πότε χρηστέον 11
ἀφροδισίοις εἰπεῖν, Ὅταν ἑαυτοῦ θέλῃς ἥττων γενέσθαι. 12

7 ὑπελάμβανον] P ὑπελάμβανεν Valesius 8 <δὲ>] Valesius
ἀσθενείας] Salmasius ἀσθενείαν P 9 ἐνόμιζον] scripsi ἐνόμιζε P
12 ἥττων] Dindorf² ἥττον M

Translation

Pythagoras commanded his pupils seldom to give oaths but when they did give oaths to abide by them in all circumstances. The same Pythagoras when considering what was advantageous concerning sex commanded his pupils not to approach women in the summer and in the winter to resort to them sparingly.

For, as a general rule, they supposed that all types of sexual activities were harmful and they thought that continual practice of them was thoroughly productive of weakness and ruin.

They say that Pythagoras, when asked by someone when one should engage in sex, said whenever you wish not to be in control of yourself.

Relevance of the Text for the *Pythagorean Precepts*

There is no direct evidence that this sentence derives from the *Precepts* nor have previous scholars included it among the fragments of the *Precepts*. It is neither expressly identified as coming from the *Precepts* as are fragments 1–7 (and fragment 8 by its use of the characteristic term ἀπρόφασις) nor does it appear in context of material expressly identified as from the *Precepts* as do fragments 9–11. Accordingly there must always be doubt as to whether it really derives from the *Precepts* and it is included here only as a subsidiary precept. However, the indirect evidence that it derives from the *Precepts* is very strong and I think that there is at least a fifty percent chance that it appeared in the *Precepts*. Four pieces of evidence tie the sentence to the *Precepts*. First, the manuscript tradition suggests that the subject of both verbs in the sentence was plural (see the detailed commentary on lines 7–9 below). The *Precepts* universally use plural verb forms with no expressed subject as is the case in the sentence in question. It would appear that Diodorus was collecting the views of Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans on sex and here preserves the plurals of the *Precepts* amongst other reports that use the singular with Pythagoras himself as the subject. The plurals stand out here just as they do in Iamblichus when he incorporates sections from the *Precepts* into his account, which generally focuses on Pythagoras in the singular. Second, the sentence uses one of the most characteristic phrases of the *Precepts*, “as a general rule” (καθόλου) in presenting the precept (see point 6 in [Chapter 3](#) of the Introduction). Third, the sentence has the structure of indirect statement following verbs of thinking that is characteristic of the *Precepts* and uses one of the verbs (ὑπελάμβανον) typically used in the *Precepts* (see point 2 in [Chapter 3](#) of the Introduction). Fourth, the attitude towards sexuality expressed in the sentence closely corresponds to the presentation of sex in fragments 9 and 4 of the *Precepts*, where the Pythagoreans assert that their followers must rarely engage in sex (fr. 9, line 137) and that this contributes to the good condition of the individual (fr. 4, line 13), just as engaging in sex is said to produce weakness and destruction here in S4.

The material from the *Precepts* appears to be limited to the single sentence in lines 7–9. The material both before and after talks of Pythagoras himself rather than the Pythagoreans while the *Precepts* never refer to Pythagoras himself. The sentence following lines 7–9

takes a form found commonly in the doxographical tradition where a prominent figure gives an answer to a question (“When asked . . . he said”). This form is never found in the secure fragments of the *Pythagorean Precepts*. See further the discussion of section 6 of fragment 9 above.

Content of Subsidiary Precept 4

The precept is quite sweeping in its condemnation of sexual activity. The Pythagoreans assert that the (entire) class (τὸ γένος) of sexual activities, i.e. sexual activities of all types, is harmful. Thus even the occasional and isolated practice of sex does harm. The second half of the sentence then emphasizes that the continual practice of sex leads to complete weakness and ruin, presumably of both body and soul. As noted above, this attitude towards sex coheres well with the more detailed discussions of sexuality in frs. 4 and 9 (lines 124–76) and in particular with the assertions that 1) there should be as many hindrances to sex as possible (fr. 9, lines 144–5), 2) no one should engage in sex before the age of twenty, and only rarely thereafter (fr. 9, lines 136–8), and 3) avoidance of sex contributes greatly to the good condition (εὐεξία) of both parents and offspring (fr. 4, lines 12–13). For further discussion of the Pythagorean attitude to sex see the commentary on lines 124–76 of fragment 9.

Detailed Commentary

Line 7 – καθόλου: For the use of this word in the *Precepts* see the commentary on fragment 2, line 1 and [Chapter 3](#) of the Introduction. Elsewhere in the *Precepts* it is commonly used with μέν or δέ and it seems likely that Diodorus replaced one of these particles with γάρ in order to fit this sentence from the *Precepts* into his text as evidence for the assertion of Pythagoras in the previous sentence.

Lines 7–9 – υπελάμβανον . . . ἐνόμιζον: The manuscripts have the plural for the first verb and the singular for the second (see Cohen-Skalli 2012: 195). Since the preceding and following sentences talk exclusively in terms of what Pythagoras commanded or said, editors have universally chosen the singular for both verbs in lines 7–9. However, the plural is clearly the *lectio difficilior* precisely because the singular is used in the context. It is very hard to understand why the singular would be changed to the plural in lines 7–9, whereas, if the plurals were the

originals, it is easy to see how one or both of them might be changed to the singular in this context. Other features of lines 7–9 suggest that they may derive from Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* (see above) and the plurals would of course fit with the universal use of the plural elsewhere in the *Precepts*. Diodorus is combining several sources to present his account of Pythagorean attitudes towards sex, and the use of the plural in lines 7–9 in contrast to the surrounding singulars shows that these three lines are likely to come from another source, in all probability the *Pythagorean Precepts*. For the use of ὑπελάμβανον in the *Precepts* see point 2 in [Chapter 3](#) of the Introduction and the commentary on fragment 2, line 1.

Line 8 – βλαβερόν: In fragment 9, lines 65–6 the Pythagoreans assert that pleasure is an unseemly and harmful (βλαβερόν) aim for action. So it is consistent that the same adjective should be used here to describe specifically sexual pleasure as was used to describe pleasure in general.

Line 8 – συνέχειαν: This noun appears first in Plato where it refers to a (mere) succession of words (*Soph.* 261e1). It appears a number of times in fourth-century authors such as Aristotle (twenty-five uses) and Theophrastus (seven uses). It appears three times in the *Elementa Harmonica* of Aristoxenus where it is a technical term referring to the “continuity” of notes in a scale. The topic is complex but the basic idea is that notes are continuous if no note lies between them in a given scale (Barker 1989: 129, n. 19). The closest parallels to the usage here in the *Precepts*, where it refers to the continual practice of sexual activity, are Hippocrates *Precepts* 13.5 and Theophrastus *Hist. pl.* 6.8.4. The former passage refers to continuous reading (ἀναγνώσιος συνεχείης) and the latter to the continuous blooming of flowers throughout the year.

Line 8 – τελέως: This word is also found in fragment 11, line 24, in the advice not to willingly take up enmity to anyone not “completely bad.”

Appendix 4

Stobaeus, *Eclogae* 3.1.71: Divination, Medicine, and Music

Stobaeus, *Eclogae* 3.1.71 [περὶ ἀρετῆς]

(No lemma)

Ἐκ μὲν τῆς μαντικῆς πρόνοιαν ἔφασαν δεῖν ἐπιζητεῖν, ἐκ δὲ τῆς 1
ἰατρικῆς τῆς τε προνοίας ἐπανόρθωσιν· ταῦτα γὰρ εἶναι πέρατα 2
τῆς ἰατρικῆς ἐπιστήμης· ἐκ δὲ τῆς μουσικῆς αἴσθησιν ἀκριβῆ τε 3
καὶ ἐπιστημονικὴν, ἐκ δὲ τῶν μαθηματικῶν ὀνομαζομένων 4
συλλογισμόν τε καὶ ἀπόδειξιν τῶν δι' αὐτῶν νοημάτων. 5

1 μαντικῆς] Nauck προμαντικῆς Tr.

Translation

They said that it was necessary to seek foreknowledge from divination, but from medicine and foreknowledge correction. For these are the ends of medical knowledge. From music [it is necessary to seek] accurate and scientific perception and from what is called mathematics reasoning and demonstration of the conceptions that arise through it.

Context and History of Scholarship

This text comes from Book 3 of Stobaeus' *Anthology* and more specifically from Chapter 1, which is a series of excerpts under the heading "On Virtue." It is the 71st excerpt in Chapter 1 in Hense's edition of Stobaeus. On the one hand, it is immediately preceded by ten lines of verse supposedly from the poet Linus. Linus was originally someone lamented in a song or the name of the song, but he is turned into a composer of laments in the later tradition, and by the end of the third century BC poems started to be composed in his name (West 1983: 56–67). Diogenes Laertius (1.4) treats him along with Musaeus as the earliest of Greek philosophers and ascribes a cosmogony to him. Stobaeus preserves two excerpts from a poem *On the Nature of the World*

composed in his name including these ten lines, which end with a warning against gluttonous desire. Our text is, on the other hand, immediately followed by an excerpt from Isocrates' *Nicocles or the Cyprians* 61 ("Do not do to others those things which you are angered to suffer at the hands of others"). There is thus no obvious connection between excerpt 71 and the preceding and following excerpts except that they all in some way deal with virtue. Excerpt 71 is only preserved in the sixteenth-century edition of Victor Trincavellus, which is a faithful reproduction of the codex Marcianus of Stobaeus. In that edition it is run together with the preceding lines of Linus and there is thus no lemma identifying the author and the name of the work from which excerpt 71 comes. Gesner, in his edition of Stobaeus (1559), first separated excerpt 71 from excerpt 70. There is thus no manuscript evidence suggesting that excerpt 71 derives from the *Pythagorean Precepts* of Aristoxenus. Meineke in his edition of Stobaeus (line 6; 1857, LIII) was the first to suggest that excerpt 71 came from the *Precepts* and Mewaldt (1904: 33) supported Meineke's suggestion. DK (1.468.24), without comment, cites (but does not quote) it as a parallel text for Iamblichus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* 163, which they regard as part of the *Precepts*. Later scholars (e.g., Wehrli 1967, Burkert 1972, Zhmud 2012a) have generally ignored excerpt 71 and thus tacitly reject its claim to be part of the *Pythagorean Precepts*. Meineke (line 12; 1857: LVI) also identified Stobaeus 3.1.199 as from the *Precepts*, but it shows no connection to the *Precepts* in format, style or content.

Content

Before considering whether the excerpt comes from the *Precepts*, it is necessary to come to at least a provisional understanding of its content. The excerpt is quite obscure in places, in part because we do not have the larger context in which it appeared. The excerpt presents a series of sciences and then identifies what we should expect to gain from pursuing each of them. The first example is straightforward: from the science of divination we should seek foreknowledge. Obscurity arises in the following sentence. We are told to seek correction from medicine and foreknowledge. Correction of what? Since the context is medicine it appears that the correction meant is the correction of some diseased

state of the body. This use of ἐπανόρθωσις (correction) is not found in the early Greek medical texts known as the Hippocratic corpus but it is very common in Galen in the second century AD (see below). The excerpt then explains this last assertion by telling us that “these” are the limits or ends of medical knowledge. The reference of “these” is puzzling, since the only two things that have just been mentioned are foreknowledge and correction and they are not parallel to each other in the grammatical construction. Still perhaps the idea is that the two central goals of medicine are prognosis (foreknowledge) and correction of whatever diseased state is identified in this prognosis. There are still puzzles, since the fragment seems to mix the irrational and the rational in an odd way: it suggests that the doctor first determine the course of the disease by divination and then use medical knowledge to correct the diseased state.

Despite these obscurities, the first part of the excerpt has a unified focus on medicine. The excerpt then jumps to another science, music, with no suggestion of a connection to medicine. We are told to seek accurate and scientific perception from music. This is a perfectly intelligible statement of a music theory such as that of Aristoxenus, in which the evidence of our senses plays a central role; the senses are, however, not presented as passive receptors of raw data but rather as governed in some way by reason so that the perception is “scientific.” The fragment then turns to yet another subject in the last sentence where we are finally told that from what is called mathematics we are to seek reasoning and demonstration of the concepts that arise in it. In itself this makes good sense; the study of mathematics does train our reasoning capacity and in particular it teaches us to devise demonstrations or proofs. It is, however, odd that music has been separated here from mathematics, since traditionally mathematics included music along with arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy (Archytas fr. 1; Plato adds stereometry to these four in *Resp.* 7). So the excerpt is an odd combination of the obvious and the obscure.

Is Stobaeus 3.1.71 an Authentic Fragment of the *Precepts*?

It is important to recognize that no ancient author ascribes this text to the *Precepts* and that it is not found in the immediate context of other material from the *Precepts*. Thus the arguments for its inclusion as a fragment of the *Precepts*, which start with Meineke in his edition of Stobaeus, are all indirect. Meineke does not even list the excerpt as

from Aristoxenus in his text (1855, vol. 1, p. 78 lines 14–20 = section 3.52) and only suggests that it is from the *Precepts* in the addenda to vol. 1, which was published in vol. 4 (p. LIII). He gives no reason for his suggestion beyond noting that Stobaeus frequently quotes from the *Precepts*. Mewaldt spells out some of the reasoning that presumably lay behind Meineke's suggestion (1904: 33). There appear to be two main arguments: 1) the formula "they said" (ἐφασσαν) used in the excerpt is typical of the *Precepts* and Stobaeus quotes from the *Precepts* several times elsewhere in the *Anthology* (the closest being 3.1.101); 2) the content of the excerpt is similar to a passage in Iamblichus (VP 163) that Mewaldt believed to come from Aristoxenus. Neither of these points is conclusive.

The mere use of ἐφασσαν is not conclusive because this form appears nine other times in Stobaeus, none of which are associated with the *Precepts*; it is, in fact, a common usage in doxographical reports (see 1.22.3a and 1.27.2.1 both of which are from the doxographer Aetius). The point may rather be that it is the use of ἐφασσαν with no expressed subject and followed by δεῖν that is characteristic of the *Precepts*. There is no other parallel for this usage in Stobaeus, not even in the excerpts that he quotes from the *Precepts*. There are, however, three instances of this usage in passages in Iamblichus that are likely to derive from the *Precepts* (VP 101, 183 and 233, cf. 174 where δεῖν is not used). Thus, it is certainly the case that this usage is characteristic of the *Precepts*. However, the question is whether it is unique to the *Precepts*, in which case we would have good reason to suppose that Stobaeus is drawing on them, or whether it is also found in other ancient authors. In fact, it appears several times in fourth-century authors such as Xenophon (*Hell.* 1.28.3) and Demosthenes (*De cor.* 152.2) before becoming fairly common in Polybius and Diodorus, but none of these are philosophical texts. Once again we might want to refine the criteria and say that what is distinctive is the use of ἐφασσαν δεῖν in a philosophical context. Defined this way the usage in excerpt 3.1.71 does seem to find its only parallel in the *Precepts* so that this is positive support for the idea that the excerpt derives from the *Precepts*. It is not conclusive, however, because there is certainly no obvious reason why the relatively common phrase ἐφασσαν δεῖν could not have been used in a philosophical context in some other text than the *Precepts*, even if a precise parallel has not been preserved.

The second argument is that the excerpt begins by highlighting three sciences (divination, medicine and music) and it is precisely these three sciences which Pythagoras honored the most according to Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* 163. This does suggest the possibility that *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* 163 and this excerpt reflect the same tradition, but the question is whether Aristoxenus' *Pythagorean Precepts* were the origin of this shared tradition. As Mewaldt correctly saw, 163 is not from the *Precepts* because it describes the habits of the Pythagoreans rather than setting forth their precepts. Mewaldt, however, suggested that 163 was from a different work of Aristoxenus, *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, which did describe their habitual behavior. He then argues that excerpt 3.1.71 in Stobaeus derives from the corresponding part of the *Precepts* which set out the philosophical principles, which are then reflected in the behavior described in 163. This approach seems quite reasonable, but the question remains whether 163 is, in fact, from any work of Aristoxenus. A majority of scholars have thought with varying degrees of confidence that it does come from Aristoxenus (Mewaldt 1904: 29; Rohde 1871–2 = 1901: 156–7; DK 1.467.3; Burkert 1972: 262, “probably from Aristoxenus”; Zhmud 2012a: 155, “apparently stems from Aristoxenus,” 185, n. 61, “probably from Aristoxenus”). Wehrli (1967), on the other hand, did not include VP 163 in his collection of the fragments of Aristoxenus. Indeed the arguments for regarding it as based on Aristoxenus are not strong (see Chapter 6 of the Introduction). So the similarity with 163 suggests that Stobaeus 3.1.71 comes from the same tradition but there is no compelling evidence that Aristoxenus was the origin of that tradition. The use of *ἔφασσαν δεῖν* in 3.1.71 raises the possibility that it comes from the *Precepts* without demonstrating that it does. In order to make a final decision, we need to examine further the content of 3.1.71.

The central terms in the first part of the excerpt are foreknowledge (*πρόνοια*), divination (*μαντική*) and medicine (*ἰατρική*). While health does play an important part elsewhere in the *Precepts* (fr. 9, 110–22), there is no significant connection with the excerpt, since the *Precepts* do not use the term *ἰατρική*, put the emphasis on diet, which is not mentioned in the excerpt, and do not make the connection between medicine and foreknowledge that is found in excerpt 71. The term foreknowledge does appear in the *Precepts* (fr. 9, lines 150 and 151) but it is used in a quite different way than in the excerpt. The *Precepts* call on those procreating to give great forethought for their future offspring but this has nothing

to do with the divination mentioned in the excerpt. Instead the greatest forethought (πρόνοια) is said to be that they come to the production of children having lived in a temperate way. The term πρόνοια does not figure prominently elsewhere in the Pythagorean tradition. It never appears in Diogenes Laertius' *Life of Pythagoras* and appears only once in Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras*, where men are urged to take forethought for the future (40). It does appear seven times in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*, and here in addition to passages that urge forethought about the future there is a strand of thought which emphasizes that nothing comes to be by chance, but all things come to be by divine providence (πρόνοια VP 145). This strand of thought very much agrees with the emphasis on divination in the excerpt and in Iamblichus VP 163. If the world is governed by divine providence then it is of central importance to discover the will of the gods through divination, which becomes one of the most important sciences. This tight connection between foreknowledge and divination is found prominently in the Stoic tradition where it is asserted that "divination is real if there really is providence" (Diog. Laert. 7.149). But this whole strand of thought in the later Pythagorean tradition, according to which all things arise by divine providence and where there is no chance, is totally at odds with the *Precepts*, which give a prominent role to chance in human life (fr. 7). So, if it were certain that Stobaeus 3.1.71 embraced the idea that there is no chance, it would be very doubtful that it could derive from the *Precepts*. However, 3.1.71 does not explicitly say that there is no chance and it is possible that it just intends to assign an important role to divine foreknowledge, without going so far as to deny that there is no chance.

The situation is similar with the term for divination, μαντική. It is not particularly prominent in the Pythagorean tradition. It never appears in the secure fragments of the *Precepts*. It also never appears in Porphyry's *Life of Pythagoras*. It does appear three times in Diogenes Laertius' *Life of Pythagoras* and four times in Iamblichus' *On the Pythagorean Way of Life*. Some of these passages discuss Pythagoras' own use of, or teaching about, divination. Thus he was said to practice just certain sorts of divination, i.e. through chance utterances and augury, while rejecting the use of burnt offerings except for frankincense (Diog. Laert. 8.20). He is also said to have made the slumber of his pupils prophetic (Iambl. VP 65), urged them to respect all divination (Diog. Laert. 8.24) and advised them to avoid anything that hindered divination (Iambl. VP 138).

We cannot be sure whether these reports belong to the early tradition about Pythagoras or whether they developed in the later tradition. There is evidence that divination became more important later in the Pythagorean tradition. Thus the *Pythagorean Notes*, consulted by Alexander Polyhistor and dating to the Hellenistic period, argue that the whole air is full of souls and that these souls send signs to men and that divination and omens arise in this way (Diog. Laert. 8.32). That there are souls in the air around us seems to belong to the early Pythagorean tradition (Burkert 1972: 189–91), but the connection to divination is not attested in the early evidence. It is certainly true that divination has become very important in the Pythagoreanism of the Roman period (Flinterman 2014: 346; Cicero *Div.* 1.5). The fact that there is no parallel elsewhere in the *Precepts* for the emphasis on foreknowledge and divination in Stobaeus 3.1.71 need not mean that it does not derive from the *Precepts*; it could be that these topics were discussed just in one part of the *Precepts* and that 3.1.71 is that part. However, the emphasis on the role of chance in human life in the *Precepts* (fr. 7) and the failure to say anything about divine providence, when discussing the gods, at least casts doubt on whether 3.1.71 can have originated in the *Precepts*. Moreover, the prominence of divination and providence in 3.1.71 is suggestive of its role in the later Pythagorean tradition, which may have been influenced by Stoic conceptions about divination.

The excerpt then goes on to assert that one should seek ἐπανόρθωσις from medicine and foreknowledge. At first sight the use of this word suggests a connection with the *Precepts*, since it is used in the discussion of friendship in the *Precepts*, which is preserved in Iamblichus *VP* 231=101 (fr. 11, lines 11–12). In this passage we are told that the Pythagoreans thought that corrections and admonitions (ἐπανορθώσεις τε καὶ νοουθετήσεις), which they called “right tunings,” ought to be delivered with much caution. That this is Aristoxenus’ own word rather than an insertion by Iamblichus is further suggested by Aristotle’s use of the word in the context of friendship (*EN* 1165b19. We should only abandon friends if they are incurably bad and should not abandon them if they admit of reform [ἐπανόρθωσιν]). On the other hand the word is fairly rare in the fourth century appearing in only two passages of Aristotle, once in Isocrates and three times in Demosthenes. It becomes much more common starting with Polybius in the second century BC. It is moreover used several times by Iamblichus when he is speaking in his own voice

(VP 195 and 162, *De Mysteriis* 3.3.37, *Comm. Math.* 92.2), and he does use it at the end of section 102 when giving his own summary of the material from the *Precepts* in 101–2. So the parallel with Aristotle suggests that we assign the word to Aristoxenus in 231=101, but the overall evidence for the usage of the word, and the fact that it is paired with another noun, raises the possibility that it is introduced by Iamblichus as part of his typical expansive rewriting of the *Precepts*. When it comes to excerpt 3.1.71 of Stobaeus, however, it is important to note that the word is not used in the context of friendship but rather of medicine and seems to refer to the correction of an undesirable condition in the body. There is no parallel for this usage in fourth-century Greek and the word never appears in the Hippocratic corpus. What is notable is that it becomes very common indeed in Galen, appearing over eighty times mostly in reference to the correction of an undesirable affection of the body (e.g., *Method of Medicine* 10.7). Indeed the only parallel in Greek for the use of the term in the context of ἰατρική is Galen, who considers, only to reject, the suggestion that the goal of medicine should be defined as the ἐπανόρθωσις of health (*Thrasybulus* 5.855.11 Kühn). The use of the word in 3.1.71 is thus not decisive for its authenticity; the parallel with Aristoxenus' possible use of the term in the context of friendship speaks for authenticity, but the use of the term in a strictly medical context suggests that it was composed long after the *Precepts*.

The most important passage in the excerpt for determining authenticity of 3.1.71 is the following assertion, i.e. that we should seek accurate and scientific perception from music (ἐκ δὲ τῆς μουσικῆς αἰσθησιν ἀκριβῆ τε καὶ ἐπιστημονικὴν). At first sight the assertion might again seem to support assigning the excerpt to Aristoxenus but closer examination shows that it makes it very likely that the excerpt does not come from the *Pythagorean Precepts*. There are several points of interest, but most apparent is the use of the expression “scientific perception.” The word for “scientific” (ἐπιστημονική) appears first in Aristotle, who uses it some twenty times. One might suppose that Aristoxenus is borrowing a word from his teacher but it would be odd for him to assign such a technical Aristotelian usage back to the Pythagoreans. Even more significantly, the expression “scientific perception” is noticeably paralleled in fragment 75 of Speusippus, where it appears five times. Indeed, the expression appears to be a coinage of Speusippus and he uses it as part of a very idiosyncratic doctrine (Dillon 2003: 78). The idea is that our perception

of the world is not the result of the unaided use of our senses but rather results from our reason using our senses, so that the sensation is thus more properly called “scientific” or “cognitive” sense perception. The expression “scientific perception” appears in only two other much later passages, which may have been influenced by Speusippus (Galen 15.134.8 Kühn and Porph. *In Ptol.* 119.9). Moreover, Barker has suggested that the doctrine being espoused by Speusippus may have had a strong attraction for Aristoxenus (2012: 308–10). Indeed, the additional assertion in the excerpt that the study of music produces “accurate perception” (αἰσθησιν ἀκριβῆ) has a very Aristoxenian ring. Aristoxenus asserts that “for the student of music accuracy of perception [ἡ τῆς αἰσθήσεως ἀκριβεία] stands just about first in order of importance” (*Harm.* 42.22 Da Rios; tr. Barker 1989: 150). This evidence then might be taken to show that the text is indeed by Aristoxenus, who was writing partly under the influence of Speusippus. If Aristoxenus were putting forth his own views this would be plausible, but, in the *Precepts*, he is presenting the teaching of the Pythagoreans and the other fragments of the *Precepts* show that he did not assign Academic and Peripatetic technical terminology back to the Pythagoreans. Assigning such terminology to the Pythagoreans would be a particularly egregious misrepresentation in this case, because the Pythagoreans differed radically from Aristoxenus precisely in not assigning the central role in music theory to perception. Thus the terminology in Stobaeus 3.1.71 makes it very unlikely that the passage comes from the *Precepts*. It is, however, characteristic of the pseudo-Pythagorean literature that particularly flourished in the first centuries BC and AD to assign Academic doctrines to the Pythagoreans, so that there is the suspicion that, if excerpt 3.1.71 derives from a Pythagorean work, it derives from one of the pseudepigrapha. Stobaeus quotes extensively from the Pythagorean pseudepigrapha elsewhere in his *Anthology*.

To sum up, there is no direct testimony indicating that Stobaeus 3.1.71 derives from the *Pythagorean Precepts*, so that any attempt to show that it does come from the *Precepts* must be based on an indirect argument derived from its contents. The use of the formula ἔφασαν δεῖν in a philosophical context suggests, but does not prove, that Stobaeus 3.1.71 might come from Aristoxenus’ *Pythagorean Precepts*, a work that Stobaeus quotes several times elsewhere in his *Anthology*. The emphasis on divination, medicine and music in the excerpt indicates a

connection with Iamblichus *VP* 163, where just these three sciences are emphasized. However, although a number of scholars have argued that *VP* 163 derives from Aristoxenus, those arguments are, in fact, not very strong so that the similarity between the excerpt and *VP* 163 does not show that the excerpt derives from Aristoxenus. Finally, the terminology used in the excerpt makes it very doubtful that it derives from the *Precepts*. The prominence of foreknowledge and divination seems at odds with the significant role given to chance in the *Precepts*. But most of all the emphasis on the accuracy of our musical perceptions and the use of Speusippus' technical term "scientific perception" make little sense in the mouths of Pythagoreans of the first part of the fourth century.

Concordance with the Fragment Numbers in Wehrli's Edition

Huffman	Wehrli	
1	34	Stobaeus 4.25.45
2	35	Stobaeus 4.1.49
3	37	Stobaeus 3.10.66
4	39	Stobaeus 4.37.4
5	40	Stobaeus 3.1.101
6	36	Stobaeus 2.31.119
7	41	Stobaeus 1.6.18
8	33	Iambl. <i>VP</i> 174–6
9	38 (in part)	Iambl. <i>VP</i> 200–13 (205–6 W)
10	---	Iambl. <i>VP</i> 180–3
11	---	Iambl. <i>VP</i> 101–2, 230–3)
Wehrli	Huffman	
33	8	
34	1	
35	2	
36	6	
37	3	
38 (in part)	9	
39	4	
40	5	
41	7	

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